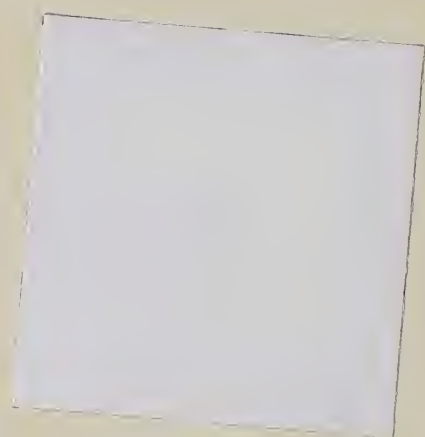


THE PRIVATE
PALACES *of* LONDON

By E. BERESFORD CHANCELLOR



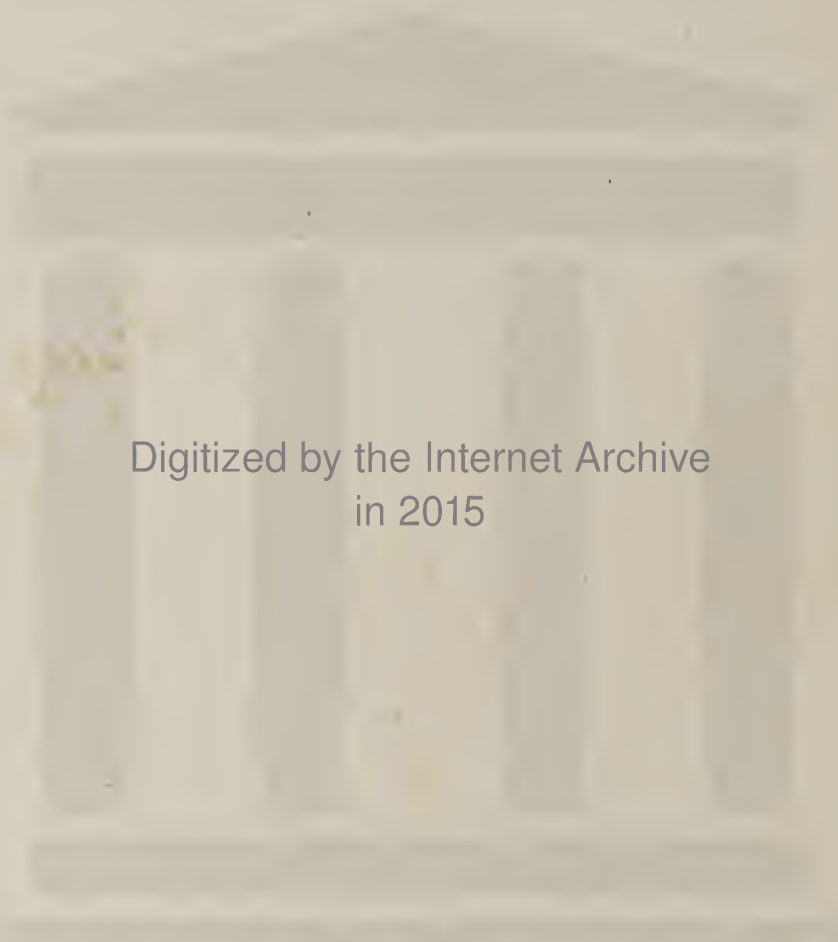


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THE PRIVATE PALACES
OF LONDON



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CHESTERFIELD HOUSE, MAYFAIR.

THE PRIVATE PALACES *of* LONDON PAST AND PRESENT

BY

E. BERESFORD CHANCELLOR, M.A.

F.R. Hist. Soc.

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE SQUARES OF LONDON," ETC. ETC.

*"A good house is a great comfort . . . and among the few felicities
that money will procure."*—MRS. MONTAGU.

WITH FORTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO. L^{TD}
DRYDEN HOUSE, GERRARD STREET, W.

1908

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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & CO.
At the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh

TO
R. T. PORTER, Esq.
WITH AFFECTIONATE REGARD
FROM
THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

IN this work I have endeavoured to rehabilitate in some way the characteristics of the more important of the famous London houses which have long since passed away, as well as to give an account of the annals of those which still remain; together with references to the notable people who have, from time to time, been connected with them. So far as existing mansions are concerned, I have also attempted to give some idea of the beautiful objects which are contained in them—particularly the pictures, without setting down mere lists of painter's names and subjects treated; and I have tried, by producing, where possible, some interesting *provenance*, or by connecting these works of art with some interesting figure, to avoid making my account of them a merely bald catalogue which, valuable as such a compilation is in itself, is rarely very exhilarating to the general reader.

The difficulty, which it would be mere affectation to ignore, of doing this has been so largely modified by the generous help extended to me by the owners of the great mansions I have described, that I feel that if I have attained any measure of success it is due to their kindness, and to the interest they have shown in this work. Many of them have afforded me personal help; many have placed at my disposal privately printed catalogues, and have permitted documents to be searched for the elucidation of some obscure point in the history of their mansions, and have, besides, given me other aids to accuracy of description; while all of them have permitted me to see all I wanted to see, and to describe all I have attempted to describe; and I here most gratefully acknowledge their many kindnesses.

My thanks are also due to many of the private secretaries and other representatives of these owners, who have also aided me in my researches.

With regard to the chapter on the old houses in Whitehall, I have, of course, largely based it on that portion of Canon Sheppard's *The Old Royal Palace of Whitehall* which specifically deals with them, and is particularly rich in its record of old leases and other documentary evidence, without which it would have been impossible to give in many instances a connected genealogy of these interesting residences. I have browsed

much here, and with a light heart, because I received the author's generous and ungrudging permission to do so.

So far as the past private palaces, other than those in Whitehall, are concerned I have made use of the rich topographical literature dealing with London which we possess; but, as usual, to no one work am I more indebted than to Mr. Wheatley's *London Past and Present*.

Waagen and Passavant, Smith and Mrs. Jameson, have helped me much with regard to the great picture collections I have had occasion to deal with; while from innumerable other works on art and artists I have culled here and there a fact which has often enabled me to say something more about a picture than to merely set down the name of its painter or the nature of its subject.

I am only too well aware that I might have done better—but I have done as well as I could, and above all I have endeavoured to “set down nought in malice”; and if among my readers there be some to whom what I try to describe is well known, and therefore *vieux jeu*, I would ask them to remember that my chief aim has been to make known to those who may not be so familiar with these great houses, the beautiful things that are contained in them, and the intrinsic interest that centres in each.

With regard to the illustrations of this book the first ten are reproductions from old prints and drawings in the Crace Collection; those of the three pictures in the Bridgewater House Gallery are from photographs taken by Mr. J. F. Hollyer of 9 Pembroke Square, Kensington; while those of the interiors and exteriors of the various houses are reproduced from photographs taken by Messrs. Bedford Lemere & Co. of 147 Strand, W.C., Mr. H. N. King of 8 Avenue Road, Shepherd's Bush, and Mr. Reginald Haines of 4 Southampton Row. All these photographs are copyright, and I wish to associate myself with my publishers in acknowledging the courtesy of the above-named gentlemen in allowing these reproductions to illustrate so graphically my pages.

E. B. C.

Sept. 15, 1908.

INTRODUCTION

IF we sought for one particular feature distinguishing London from the other capitals of Europe, apart from its immense proportions, it would probably be found in the number of its large houses many of which are indeed the private palaces that I have here called them.

The chief streets of the Metropolis are easily equalled and excelled by those in Paris, Berlin, and Vienna; its churches, numerous as they are, and, in many cases, architecturally fine, can hardly compare with those in many of the lesser continental towns; its parks and open spaces do not greatly excel in beauty those of Brussels or Paris; but its great houses are, as they have always been, a distinctive note in the picture, and, *mutatis mutandis*, may, in many cases, compare with those palaces for which Venice was once famous. But there is this difference between these mansions on the banks of the Thames and those on the shores of the Adriatic; the latter have in most instances passed from their once high estate to more utilitarian uses, and their chief glory lies in the beauty of their exteriors; whereas, if the majority of the London palaces cannot lay claim to such outwardly striking attributes, nearly every one of them contains such a wealth of beautiful objects—pictures, furniture, china, and a thousand and one *objets d'art*—that they may defy comparison with the chateaux of France, and even with Venetian palazzi in the days of their prosperity.

In many cases, too, these old houses remain in the hands of the great families whose names have been associated with them for generations, and where this is not the case, they have been lucky enough to pass into the possession of those whose instinct and pride it seems to be to preserve intact the past traditions connected with them.

Here and there, indeed, we find some great mansion which has had a later genesis in the accumulation of wealth; others that have passed into alien hands; but in either case, as if a tutelary deity had guarded the ghosts that haunt its stones or the spot on which it has been raised, its owners have either emulated the spirit of an earlier day by filling it with the precious relics of antiquity, or have preserved with reverent care its former characteristics, and have, in many cases, restored to their old home those treasures of art which formed, in a bygone age, its chief adornment, and which in the course of time had been alienated, for a period, from it.

Subject to the inevitable fate which it would seem must almost necessarily overtake even the finest buildings of this kind in a great and growing city like London, some of the great houses that have remained till within our own recollection in private hands, have either passed away or have been converted to alien, if so far as the general public is concerned better, uses. Harcourt House in Cavendish Square, which is to-day represented by a huge, and considering its position in such a "quadrate," incongruous block of residential flats, and Ashburnham House, once at the corner of Hay Hill and Dover Street, have been subjected to such a transformation; the wonderful Northumberland House at Charing Cross is now almost forgotten, so entirely has the remembrance of its Jacobean façade and its famous Lion been effaced by building development, and the construction of the street that by its name alone preserves its fleeting memory; while many of the great houses in Whitehall have either entirely disappeared or have been transformed into portions of Government offices, curiously intermixed with more modern and elaborate erections, so that they have the air of some human relic of an earlier period, who has "out-stayed his welcome while," and still wears the garb of a day that is gone.

But besides these which we have ourselves seen pass away or suffer a change as startling as it seems inevitable, there remains to be recorded a large number of great houses which are known to us merely by the pencil of the artist or the pen of the topographer.

In the first place there is the remarkable series of noble mansions which once existed in the heart of the City itself. These old private palaces, or Inns as they were formerly called, once shed lustre over streets now so wholly commercial as the Minories or Aldersgate Street, and districts now so unfashionable as Clerkenwell and Holborn; then there was that long line of palaces which extended on the south side of Fleet Street and the Strand, from Devonshire House which occupied a large portion of the site of the present Devonshire Square, to York House the magnificent residence of the brilliant Buckingham the memory of whose more than royal establishment is to-day preserved only by the names of the streets that exhaust the words of his chief title. Where now are Bedford House and Montagu House, in Bloomsbury, which in their day were so much the wonders of London, that foreigners were wont to be taken to see them as among the great sights of the capital? Where is Clarendon House, which, *immemor sepulcri*, the great Chancellor raised at infinite pains and expense, and could hardly be said to have inhabited, and which in the eyes of popular indignation was a concrete proof of his time-serving and apostacy? "Where are the

snows of yester-year ? ” You shall as soon find them as you shall Troy, or the traditional Maypole of the Strand !

And then there are those great mansions that either exist in the shape of more recent erections on their sites ; or those which have, by a process of rebuilding, lost their original characteristics, and have become identified with other usage. Of the former, there comes to mind Berkeley House, the splendid forerunner of the present Devonshire House, and old Montagu House, Whitehall, on the site of which the far more magnificent present Montagu House now stands ; among the latter may be mentioned Burlington House, over which the architect-earl who built it took such infinite pains, and which is now, with its added Piccadilly front, the home of the Royal Academy, and the headquarters of several learned societies ; and Melbourne House, once the home of Lord Melbourne (not the Prime Minister but his father), and afterwards exchanged by him with the Duke of York for York House, Piccadilly, which is now known to all Londoners as “ The Albany,” from the Royal Duke’s second title. Then there is Newcastle House in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, the former town residence of the eccentric Duke of Newcastle, the hero of half-a-hundred stories, but now the splendid legal offices of a well-known firm ; and Uxbridge House, in Burlington Gardens, the fine work of Vardy and Bonomi, to-day occupied as the Western Branch of the Bank of England ; and, to mention but one more instance, there is Schomberg House, Pall Mall, of which but a fragment remains, but which is sufficient to enable us to realise how imposing must have been the entire building before the War Office alienated its centre and east wing.

But, notwithstanding all these, and how many others, that have passed away or have been converted by the exigencies of time into other uses, so many great mansions are still with us, most of them fraught with historic memories, most of them haunted by the ghosts of the great and beautiful of a past day, all of them filled with such a wealth of splendid objects the outcome of the artistic endeavour of all ages and of all countries, that London, as I began by saying, may still glory in the possession of an unrivalled series of private palaces.

Nothing helps to show more clearly the vagaries of fashion in the matter of residential locality, or the unhasting, unrelenting flow of citizens westward, than the relative position occupied to-day by these great houses, with that occupied by their forerunners. As we have seen, the City was naturally, when we remember the limitations of London in those days, the first fashionable quarter ; as time went on some more daring spirits ventured so far westward as Charing Cross and the Strand ; others selected the open country of Bloomsbury ; and yet others found

their way into Lincoln's Inn Fields ; but with the reign of Charles II. and the inception of St. James's Square by Lord St. Albans, the inauguration of the west end, somewhat as we know it to-day, began, and the great houses of Piccadilly sprang into existence. Later still, when Sir Richard Grosvenor commenced the development of the immense property now covered by Mayfair, which had come to him through Mary Davies, an impulse was given to the erection of fine houses in this quarter, and even the magnificent Chesterfield—the glass of fashion and the mould of form—did not disdain to erect the splendid mansion which luckily still exists although shorn of its ample gardens, in a spot where, as he once humorously said, thieves and murderers so abounded that he would be obliged to keep a watch-dog.

Nowadays, however, the case is very different. The private palaces of London cluster together, if not within that circumscribed radius which Theodore Hook considered the quintessence of fashion, at least within what we, in our enlarged ideas, are apt to regard as the centre of fashionable life. Piccadilly and Park Lane, and the area known as Mayfair of which these famous thoroughfares form two sides, and their immediate vicinity is where we must now look for the residences of the wealthy and the great. True there are some splendid houses north of Oxford Street ; there is Portman House, in Portman Square, and Hertford, formerly Manchester, House in Manchester Square, although this is now, of course, a public gallery, to name but these ; there is Montagu House in Whitehall, and there are the magnificent dwellings in Belgravia ; but, so far as the great mansions with which I here deal are concerned, it is in the more restricted area that we shall chiefly find them.

And this brings me to the subject of the selection I have made. In the first place, it was obviously impossible to be exhaustive ; I mean, to deal with every great house in London which, either from its associations, or from the beauty and interest of its contents, might seem to have claimed a place in these pages.

With regard to the mansions which are no longer in existence, I have endeavoured to say something about the most interesting and the most important of them, but I have not said anything about those that once congregated together in Chelsea, for two reasons ; in the first place because, although many of them were fraught with interest, they were none of them of such magnitude as to be considered exactly as palaces, although parenthetically I am aware that in the case of some I have included, a somewhat wide extension of this term has been necessary ; and secondly because they were in former days looked upon as suburban residences, many of their owners at the same time alternately occupying

houses in London itself ; while their sites have only become incorporated with the City by its extraordinary extension in more recent days.¹ For the same reason, as well as for the better one that it has had a book specially devoted to it, I omit the beautiful and particularly interesting Holland House from this work.

Again there are a number of great houses in Belgravia, which from their size at least might have been thought appropriate for inclusion here ; but it is only their size that would under any circumstances give them a claim to be included in these pages, for necessarily from the relatively recent development of the ground on which they stand, they can pretend to no historic interest, and such splendid piles as Seaford House, Belgrave Square, and Cadogan House, Chelsea, must therefore be passed by with this bare allusion.

Then in Piccadilly, Bath House, and No. 1 Stratton Street, so long associated with the Baroness Burdett-Coutts ; Hope House, and Hertford House, now clubs and both bearing the name of former illustrious owners, as well as Lord Rothschild's fine mansion next to Apsley House, could hardly be included, splendid as they are, because had they been, then Curzon House,² and Alington House ; No. 9, Chesterfield Gardens, Lord Leconfield's London mansion ; and Bute House, to mention but these, could not have been left out ; and had these been dealt with, there would then have been innumerable important mansions in the great squares with equal claims to be considered, and there would have been no end to the book or its draft on the patience of its readers.

Selection in such cases is always rather a difficult matter ; if, as I hope, I have avoided its being an invidious one, I may reckon myself lucky. To evolve a logical definition of what may be rightly included in a book dealing with Private Palaces is, I fear, almost impossible ; the relative size of a house, though in itself alone obviously no certain criterion, must at least be considered ; historic, personal or intrinsic interest should also be present, while due weight must be given to architectural features, and the beauty of internal decorations and value, monetary as well as sentimental, of the contents ; and although it is of course a fact that there are thousands of fine mansions in London fulfilling some one or

¹ Those who are interested in the matter will find details of the old Chelsea houses in L'Estrange's *Village of Palaces*.

² I have been sorely tempted to make an exception in favour of this beautiful mansion, not only because of the charm of its interior with its splendid hall and mahogany staircase, where hang two pieces of superb tapestry for which great sums have been offered ; its fine rooms with their lovely marble mantelpieces and their thousand and one objects of interest and value ; pictures and decorative furniture, and *bric-à-brac* ; but also because Lord Howe has kindly extended every facility to me for examining the house and its contents ; but unfortunately the scheme of this work makes it impossible for me to do more than merely allude to it in this slight way.

more of these conditions, the great houses I deal with are, I venture to think, those alone that combine them all.

So far as their beautiful contents are concerned all of them are notable ; some, such as Bridgewater, Stafford and Dorchester Houses, particularly so, on account of the wonders of artistic achievement which hang on their walls or are scattered about within their vast rooms ; some are pre-eminently noticeable on account of their architectural features such as Chesterfield House, Lansdowne House, and Spencer House, and to mention more modern instances, Dorchester House, and Montagu House ; others, if less ambitious, have still some claims in this respect, and are besides hallowed by personal memories ; and of these are Apsley House and Devonshire House, Norfolk House and Portman House.

But these I have named are merely special examples of characteristics which are more or less present in them all, and it is because they are endowed with such attributes that it has seemed to me that such a title as that of Private Palaces is not inappropriate to any of them.

In dealing with these splendid mansions of the past and the present, a reflection inevitably forces itself upon the mind ; a reflection, I am bound to admit, which is not altogether a pleasant one. We have seen how many of those great houses which our forefathers erected with such loving care and at such vast expense, and each of which no doubt they considered *aere perennius*, have passed away, and how heavily "Time's destroying hand" has dealt with them. What then are we to suppose will be the fate of some of those which to-day would seem to be armed so as to defy Time ? Some we know are held on leasehold tenure, and when their term has run, may be ruthlessly demolished ; others stand proudly in the midst of ever-changing conditions of building development ; will they be, in their turn, attacked, and if so—what then ? And lastly, if a century and a half ago the westward movement began to carry fashion into what then seemed the outskirts and wilds of the Town ; may not a lesser space of time be sufficient to accentuate this movement so much that what to us are now the unfashionable portions of greater London may become the centre of the fashionable life of the future, as select as Mayfair and more sought after than Belgravia ?

This is, of course, but daring conjecture ; but what has been, may well be again ; and if such a day does ever come, and books continue to be read, as it is not improbable they still even then may be, the equivalent to Macaulay's New Zealander will perhaps be glad to learn something of the grandeur of these great houses, and will wonder at the wealth and artistic beauty that was accumulated within them.

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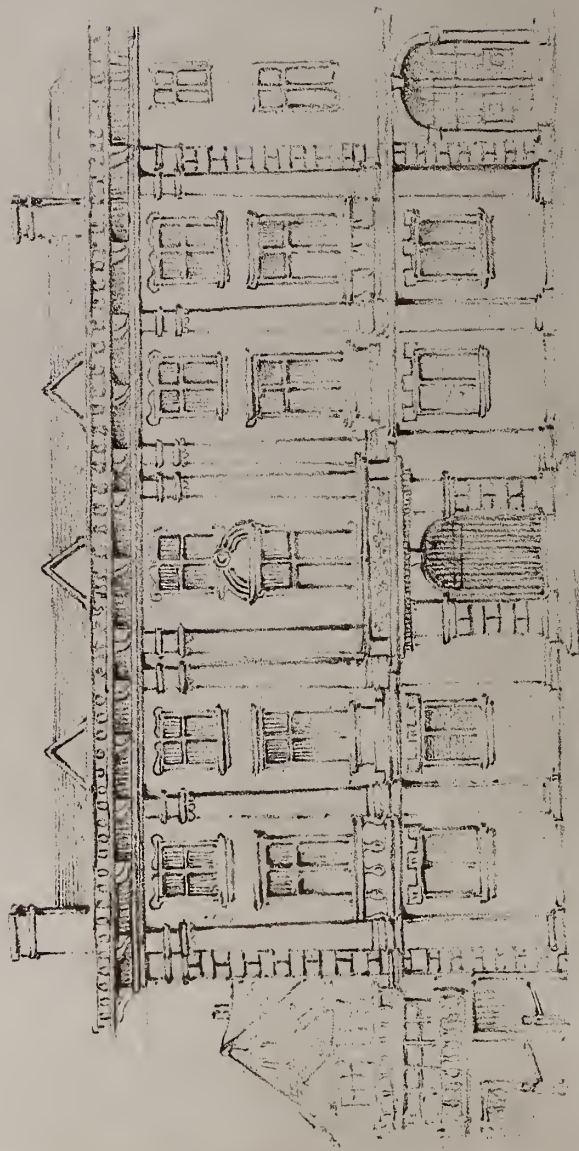
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LORD SHAFTESBURY HOUSE.



SHAFTESBURY, FORMERLY THANET, HOUSE, ALDERSGATE STREET.

THE PRIVATE PALACES OF LONDON

CHAPTER I

PAST CITY PALACES

CONSIDERING that no such iconoclastic movement as that which on two notable occasions devastated Paris, or, by a superb effort of indignant patriotism, practically wiped out Moscow, has ever occurred in London, it might at first seem strange that so many great private dwellings are but things of the past, and their very sites only known to those who have given themselves to the particular study of ancient landmarks, did we not remember that building development has done what popular excitement has never been able to compass, and indeed has never, except on one occasion,¹ seriously attempted. Many of the great houses that are no longer in existence were situated in the eastern portion of London, which fashion began to desert over two hundred years ago, and where they once stood, streets and squares now feebly perpetuate in their names the glories of these once splendid palaces. In this way such noble buildings as Devonshire, Salisbury, Rutland, Northampton, York, and Northumberland Houses are now but memories, and the ample proportions of some of them can but be approximately guessed at by the accounts left by early topographers.²

Again in Piccadilly, three particularly fine mansions have disappeared, Clarendon House, Burlington House (where the imposing buildings known by that name now stand), and Berkeley House, which formerly occupied

¹ The Gordon Rioters would have destroyed more than one great private dwelling had they not been checked.

² The great buildings appertaining to the Church, which congregated along the banks of the Thames south of the Strand and Fleet Street, can hardly be included among private dwellings.

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the site of Devonshire House; to say nothing of Lanesborough House, where St. George's Hospital is now situated.

In Whitehall, where once clustered a number of fine private residences, the magnificent but modern Montagu House is the only great mansion which can be regarded in any way as a private palace; Rutland, Richmond, Portland, Pembroke, Carrington, Fife, Dover, Rochester, and Wallingford Houses have all disappeared; and Gwydwr House alone survives as the headquarters of one of the Government offices.

Berkeley House, in Spring Gardens, is no more; nor, if we turn our steps to Bloomsbury, shall we find any trace of Southampton House, once the glory of Bloomsbury Square, or of Montagu House which has long been swallowed up in the vast buildings of the British Museum.

Chandos House in Cavendish Square, which indeed was never completed, is as forgotten as Nineveh; and all that remains of the vast conceptions of the "Princely Chandos" are the two ends of the wings which he had allocated to the use of his servants, one of which was once occupied by a royal princess, and the other has now been metamorphosed into the seemingly inevitable flats; while Harcourt House, close by, has in our own day been demolished in favour of the same class of dwellings.

Other instances might be given, as showing that the exigencies of building development have proved more hostile to the older houses of London than many revolutions would probably have been.

Before I turn to some of those private palaces which are one of the glories of London to-day, I shall say something in this chapter about the great houses of the City which have passed away, and the associations that still cluster round their memories.¹

Let us begin with DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, in the City, which stood on the site of the present Devonshire Square, the whole of the north side of which was occupied by it and its ample gardens. It was erected by Jasper Fisher, one of the six clerks in Chancery and a Justice of the Peace, who appears to have built it probably in the earlier portion of Elizabeth's reign. According to Stow, it was a large and beautiful house, with gardens of pleasure, bowling alleys, and such-like; and the seeming absurdity of a man in Fisher's position building such an ostentatious dwelling appears to have struck the populace, who called it in consequence, "Fisher's Folly." Indeed it seems that Fisher ruined himself by this building, and if he ever lived in the place, it could only have been for a relatively short time, for Pennant mentions that a Mr. Cornwallis, and after him, Sir Roger Manners occupied it, before it was taken by the Earl of Oxford,

¹ It need hardly be said that there is record of many fine houses in the City which cannot be considered in the light of palaces, and therefore need not be specified.

Lord High Chamberlain to Elizabeth, who once, at least, entertained the Queen here, on the occasion of one of her visits to the City.

The seventeenth Earl of Oxford succeeded his father in August 1562, and according to Machyn's *Diary*, on the 3rd of September, he rode to London, and thence, by "Chepe and Ludgate, to Tempelle bare," which seems to indicate that he had not then, at any rate, become possessed of Fisher's mansion. Lord Oxford was held in high favour by Elizabeth, to whom he is traditionally supposed to have presented the first pair of perfumed gloves imported into this country. A passage in the Harleian MSS. refers to him as "a man in minde and body, absolutely accomplished with honourable endowments."

Although Pennant seems to indicate that Manners preceded Lord Oxford in the occupation of the house, Stow gives him as residing here after that peer. The matter is not, however, of great importance.

In the reign of James I. the Earl of Argyle was living here, probably having purchased the property after the death of Lord Oxford which occurred in 1604. It is uncertain how long he retained it; but that he was anxious to dispose of it in 1615, is proved by an entry in the East India Company's Calendar for January 10th, of that year, where it is mentioned as being offered to the Company, but was found "unfit for their service." Later the Marquis of Hamilton resided here, and when he died, in March 1625, "his body was carried with much company and torchlights to Fisher's Folly, his house without Bishopsgate."

Soon after the death of Lord Hamilton, the second Earl of Devonshire bought the mansion, and died here, on June 20, 1628.¹ The house seems to have remained in the Cavendish family till towards the end of the seventeenth century, and in November 1660, we read of King Charles, the Queen, the Duke of York, and other members of the royal family being entertained here by the old Countess of Devonshire, who died, at a great age, in 1689, and whom Strype, writing in 1720, mentions as dwelling here within his memory, "in great repute for her hospitality."²

During the Civil Wars and the Protectorate it is probable that the family withdrew from the place, for the house, or more probably the chapel attached to it, was converted into a Baptist and Presbyterian meeting-house, in which connection it is mentioned by Butler in his *Hudibras*. Its use as a centre of sectarianism was apparently continued for some years after the Restoration, for not till 1670 was it suppressed

¹ The Cavendish family had been associated with this part of the town from the time of Henry VIII. The wife of Thomas Cavendish, Treasurer of the Exchequer to the King, being buried in St. Botolph's Church.

² A broadside ballad, called "The Entertainment of Lady Monk at Fisher's Folly," dated 1660, is extant.

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under the "Act for the Suppression of Conventicles," when it was converted into one of the places "appointed to be used every Lord's day for the celebration of divine worship by approved orthodox ministers." Later, at the close of the seventeenth century, when the Penny Post was started, Mr. Murray contrived and set up his "Bank of Credit," at Devonshire House, where men "depositing their goods and merchandize were furnished with Bills of current credit, at two-thirds or three-fourths of the value of said goods"; which was apparently a sort of glorified pawnbroker's business! As in the case of so many old buildings in London which disappeared before the industrious J. T. Smith and others who followed in his steps, carefully noted such matters, the date of the demolition of Devonshire House is merely conjectural. It was probably allowed to gradually fall into ruin and decay, and when finally pulled down attracted only the notice of those specifically interested in the ground on which it stood.

If little is known about the fate of Devonshire House, still less is recorded concerning that of NORTHAMPTON HOUSE, once the town residence of the Earls of Northampton, which stood with its gardens on the site of what is now Northampton Square, in Clerkenwell, where the present Lord Northampton, who is lord of the manor, possesses much valuable property; or of that of BRIDGEWATER HOUSE, whose name is alone perpetuated in Bridgewater Square. Lord Bridgewater's mansion faced the Barbican, and the grounds, extending northward, are marked by Bridgewater Gardens (now known as Fann Street); the house itself standing, according to Stow, where the Square, which has been much cut up, once existed. The mansion was entered by a narrow way from the Barbican, where it was situated rather east of Aldersgate Street. Its buildings, in front of which was a courtyard, extended about 200 feet east and west, and its gardens behind had an area of about 250 by 150 feet, as may be seen in Ogilby's plan dated 1677.

The house was destroyed by fire in April 1687,¹ and the two elder sons of the third Earl who had only succeeded to the title in the previous year, perished in the flames, together with their tutor who had endeavoured to save their lives. Evelyn records that the orchards attached to the gardens were celebrated for their productiveness, and during the Civil Wars this was so much the case that the diarist accounts for it by the fact that the scarcity of coal in the metropolis caused a corresponding decrease in the volume of smoke; a deduction which will rejoice the heart of Sir William Richmond! Evelyn adds, "The city of London resembles rather the face of Etna, the court of Vulcan Stromboli, or the suburbs of hell,

¹ Pennant erroneously gives the date as 1675.

than an assembly of rational creatures.”¹ What would he have said of it to-day?

AYLESBURY HOUSE, Clerkenwell, is another of the great private palaces that have gone, nor “left a wrack behind.” At one time the mansion and its grounds, which extended from Clerkenwell Green, on the west side of St. John’s Street, southward for some 500 feet, belonged to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; but was later granted to the Bruces, Earls of Aylesbury, the first of whom, who was created a peer in 1665, and held many high offices, such as that of Deputy Earl Marshal, and Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and was one of the twelve commoners deputed to invite Charles II. to return to this country, dates many of his letters from here, in 1671.

Close to Clerkenwell Green, was still standing in Pennant’s time, ALBEMARLE or NEWCASTLE HOUSE, the residence of the so-called “mad duchess,” widow of the second Duke of Albemarle who, in the Ellis correspondence, is described as being “burnt to a coal with hot liquor,” and last surviving daughter and co-heiress of Henry Cavendish, second Duke of Newcastle, who died in it in 1734, at the age of ninety-six, and of whom I shall have something more to say when speaking of Montagu House, Bloomsbury.

Here, had previously lived, in great magnificence, that Duke of Newcastle, who is remembered not only as a patron of the men of genius of his day, but more particularly by his elaborate work on horsemanship; and with him his second duchess, the Margaret of Newcastle who among other books wrote the well-known life of her husband, and is enshrined for all time in the eulogistic reference of Charles Lamb. Evelyn visited the Duke and Duchess here, and in his *Diary* for April 18, 1667, one of these occasions is recorded thus: “I went to make court to the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle at their house in Clerkenwell, being newly come out of the north. They received me with great kindnesse, and I was much pleased with the extraordinary fanciful habit, garb, and discourse of the Duchess.”

After the death of the “mad duchess,” Newcastle House was cut up into small tenements, and its memory is alone preserved in Newcastle Place and Newcastle Row which are situated near where it once stood. There is a view of Newcastle House in Pink’s *History of Clerkenwell*,² and the author there states that George Monk, the first Duke of Albemarle, was living here in 1686, as is also evidenced by a letter addressed

¹ Evelyn’s *Fumifugium*.

² The view of the house referred to is taken from a curious drawing by Hollar, dated 1661.

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to him here, by the Earl of Sunderland, in that year; while Sir John Bramston, in his *Autobiography*, mentions that he was with the Duke at Newcastle House when this very communication arrived on July 30th.

In Aldersgate Street quite a number of noble residences once existed; but you shall seek long enough nowadays for the least trace of any of them. There was, for example, PETRE HOUSE, once the town residence of the heads of the ancient Petre family, who lived here from the middle of the sixteenth century till the year 1639; after which, in 1657, it belonged to Henry Pierrepont, Marquis of Dorchester, who died in 1680. Later still, in consequence of the destruction of the old palace near St. Paul's, it was acquired by the See of London, and at least one bishop, Henchman, died here, in 1675; upon which event it seems to have been rented by Rawlinson, the non-juring Bishop of London.¹

Close to Petre House, on the opposite side of the street, once stood THANET HOUSE, which occupied the east side of Aldersgate Street, about 600 feet south of the Barbican; it was built round a courtyard, and had a large square garden behind to the east, and took its name from the Tuftons, Earls of Thanet, having been their town house; while it was known at a later date as Shaftesbury House when it became the residence of the Earl of Shaftesbury. Lady Pembroke in her *True Memorials* mentions the house in the following connection: "The 7 day of May, 1664, being Saturdie, about 3 o'clock dyed my sonne-in-law, John Tufton, Earle of Thanet, in his house called Thanet House, in Aldersgate Street at London, in those lodgings that look towards the street which he had about 20 years since built with freestone very magnificent."² Pennant describes it as a very fine old house, built about the time of Charles I., as well it might be when we know that Inigo Jones designed it, and states that it was either rented or purchased by Lord Shaftesbury, in the days of Charles II., who desired to have a city residence so that he could the more readily inculcate his incendiary principles among the citizens, of whom, it was his boast, that he could raise ten thousand by holding up his finger. Fearing, however, the detection of one of the many plots in which he was engaged, he fled the country in 1683, and died in Holland, whither he had taken refuge, although when in power he had never ceased advocating war against that country. Pennant, *à propos* of this, gives a curious anecdote. It appears that Shaftesbury always ended up his violent tirades against the Dutch with the words, "Delenda est Carthago." Before flying to Holland, he thought it wise to obtain specific permission to live there,

¹ There is a ground plan of this house in Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata*.

² There is an illustration extant, of which a reproduction is given here.

and to that end applied to the Republic, the magistrates of which replied in the following terms: "Carthago, non adhuc abolita, Comitem de Shaftesbury in gremio suo recipere vult!"

Thanet, or Shaftesbury House has another interest, for here, on his return from the Continent, in 1679, John Locke resided under Lord Shaftesbury's protection; indeed he seems to have made it his headquarters until his lordship went to Holland; while another interesting figure is also connected with the house, for at least, on one occasion, the Duke of Monmouth withdrew hither for concealment during the time when he was plotting against the Crown.

Some years later—to be precise, in 1708—the mansion was again in the possession of the Thanet family, from which it may be surmised that it had only been let to Lord Shaftesbury; but it soon passed to other uses, and in 1720 we find it converted into an inn—surely, considering its proportions, more like a precursor of one of the elaborate hotels of our own day, than the humble and generally exiguous hostleries of the eighteenth century! Fourteen years later it had become merely a tavern, while from 1750 to 1771, it was occupied by the London Lying-in Hospital, and two views of it as such are given in Maitland's *History of London*, published in 1756. Further vicissitudes awaited it, till, in 1882, it was finally demolished, and Shaftesbury Hall and various shops were built on its site.

Two other great mansions which also stood in Aldersgate Street were WESTMORELAND HOUSE and NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE; the former, which Pennant terms "a magnificent pile," was the town house of the Earls of Westmoreland, and its name, after it had itself gone the way of most of the stately residences of older London, survived in Westmoreland Court; the latter stood at the corner of Bull and Mouth Street, and was the infrequent London resort of Hotspur.¹ Henry IV., in the seventh year of his reign gave it to his queen and it was, for a time, known as the Queen's Wardrobe;² its later history includes its conversion successively into a printing-house and a tavern—to such base uses come the noblest piles!

Another house in this quarter, dating from about the same remote period, was SHELLEY HOUSE, erected by Sir Thomas Shelley in the first year of Henry IV.'s reign, but rebuilt by Sir Nicholas Bacon in the time of

¹ Another Northumberland House stood near Seething Lane, and was occupied by Hotspur's father, that Earl of Northumberland who once sent a challenge to Henry IV. In the reign of Henry VI. the two Earls, father and son, who were killed respectively at St. Albans and Towton, occupied it, and later it became a gaming-house, one of the first in London, according to Stow, who calls it "their ancient and only patron of misrule."

² Stow.

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Elizabeth, when it was known as Bacon House. According to Mr. Wheatley, it seems to have been inhabited jointly by the Bacon family and by Recorder Fleetwood, the friend and correspondent of Lord Burghley, and in one of his letters, dated July 21, 1578, he mentions that "my Lord Keeper (Bacon), my Ladie, and all the house are come to London this night." But Stow seems to indicate that Fleetwood possessed another and quite separate residence.¹

LAUDERDALE HOUSE was also one of the great city mansions of which all traces have disappeared. It stood on the east side of the north end of Aldersgate Street, between Crown and Hare Courts, or Nos. 51 and 63 of the present street, and, as its name implies, was the town residence of the Duke of Lauderdale, the "L" of the famous "Cabal" Ministry. According to the views of it by Tompkins, preserved in the Crowle Pennant, it appears to have stood back from the street and to have been built of red brick; and one of the illustrations represents a room on the second floor, in which can be seen the Lauderdale arms carved on the chimneypiece.

In Mark Lane, close by, was another "magnificent house," according to Strype, that of Sir William Sharrington, chief officer of the Mint² under Edward VI., and a tool of the ambitious Thomas Seymour, with whom he fell and was attainted. SHARRINGTON HOUSE was then given to Henry Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel, "being thought a fit habitation for that great peer on account of its size and splendour";³ but its later history is hidden in obscurity, as is the record of that once famous Worcester Place, near Vintner's Hall, in Upper Thames Street, where lived the enlightened though cruel John Tiptoff, Earl of Worcester, Lord High Treasurer of England, which Stow mentions as being, in his time, divided into many tenements.

Practically all vestiges of the houses of old London have passed away; nothing but their names survive in the pages of the earlier chronicles of the great city to indicate their former existence and "to point where the fabric stood"; those I have mentioned are eloquent of this; some I shall presently notice in this chapter, no less bear out the remark, for if the name of a street or a square perpetuates their one-time existence, it is as much as we can obtain in elucidation of their former approximate positions; but before passing to these, there is one notable exception in CROSBY PLACE, the Great Hall of which has only just been swept out of being.

¹ Stow, p. 291.

² Walpole conjectures that the lightness observable in the coins of Edward VI. was due to Sharrington's embezzlements. A portrait of Sir William, by Holbein, is noted by Walpole as being at Kensington Palace.

³ Pennant.

As to the merits of the controversy that has been recently raging over this splendid relic I need not enter at any great length here ; nor, unfortunately, has it any longer power to materially interest us. The harm is done ; the once splendid and interesting landmark has disappeared, and commercialism, as usual, has emerged triumphant ; but in a book dealing partly with the old houses of London, it may be expected that I should say a few words about a matter that six people consider the natural outcome of modern requirements, and half-a-dozen regard as nothing short of iconoclastic vandalism.

There is no doubt that when our own individual pockets are not in danger of being touched, we can all wax virtuously indignant against those who are not ready to sacrifice immense sums (for any preservation in London nowadays almost inevitably means this) on the altar of what one may term antiquarian patriotism ; but what does to me seem, I confess, an astounding anomaly, is that a City which is proverbially the richest in the world should not itself be in a position to rescue some of these disappearing landmarks without which it will soon come to lose all interest other than as a hive where so many bees are perpetually turning out so much honey.

We all know what happens when some old building, historically valuable and interesting, is threatened with demolition ; people who live laborious days in efforts of preservation and restoration hold meetings ; others who sympathise in such aims and are not perhaps averse, in such good causes, from seeing their names at the foot of long letters in the daily press, write to the papers ; sometimes the Mansion House oracle is invoked, and all goes merrily, what time the value of the property is being, perhaps unconsciously, enhanced, and the owners very properly are sitting quietly and saying nothing, but are probably filled with not unpleasant thoughts. At length something tangible is put forward, generally, by-the-bye, so late in the day, that some one else is already in the field with a bundle of bank-notes in one hand and in the other the ground-plan and elevation of a block of flats. And then it is that the price named is found to be naturally enough a large one, such a large one, indeed, as can only be possible to purchasers who are able to turn their speculation into a reasonable profit—and then?—why then all and sundry are asked to contribute, and the names of prominent millionaires are bandied about, and the readers of newspapers feel it a positive grievance that one of these plutocrats does not come forward and present the relic to an admiring, and, the next day, a forgetful country.

And those who by prescriptive right should, if any one should, take the burden on their own shoulders, have so often in the past been helped

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by the altruism of rich men (in the purchase of pictures for the nation there is no end to this generosity), that they apparently feel safe in risking the loss of a landmark, hoping that at the last minute such generosity will be repeated.

The loss of Crosby Hall seems to me a national loss, not only in so much weight of antiquated bricks and mortar, so much petrified tradition, as it were; but in the fact that this great city, rich as not Rome in its glory was rich, is yet not so rich but that a relatively insignificant space in its vast area can be wrested from it, and that its inability to save one of its most cherished buildings, is made patent to the world.

Shakespeare who, at one time, lived close by, has done more, perhaps, than all the topographers¹ who have written on it, to make Crosby Place famous, and it is probable that had he not laid some of the scenes of his *Richard III.* here, the connection of that sinister figure, although historically indisputable, with the place, would have come down to us in the hazy manner which makes such associations dear to antiquaries and almost unknown of the general public.

From certain excavations made in 1871 and 1873, the discovery of some tessellated pavements lead to the supposition that a Roman villa stood on the site of Crosby Place which was erected in 1466, on ground leased from Alice Ashfield, Prioress of St. Helens, for a term of ninety-nine years, at the annual rent of £11, 6s. 8d., by Sir John Crosby. Sir John is known to have been an alderman, and one of the Sheriffs of London in 1471, in which year he was knighted by Edward IV., but he died four years later, which caused Stow to write: "So short a time enjoyed he that large and sumptuous building." He was buried in the church of St. Helens, to which he had been a liberal benefactor,² where a monument to him and his wife (who died in 1466) was erected on the south side of the chancel. The house, built by Sir John, was of stone and timber, and, according to Stow, was not only very large and beautiful, but was also "the highest at that time in London."

It is a little obscure under what conditions the Duke of Gloucester obtained the place, but that he was here in 1483, we have good authority for knowing, and while here he determined on the murder of his brother the Duke of Clarence. Shakespeare makes a room in the Palace, the scene of his interview with the murderers, to whom he says: "When you have

¹ In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, London Topography, vol. i., there is an article on Crosby Place; the Rev. T. Hugo's paper on it (1856) is printed in the *Transactions of the London Archaeological Society*, and it is dealt with in every history of London; while a small book (by Mr. C. W. F. Goss) on it has recently appeared.

² *The Churches of London*, by Godwin and Britton, 1839.

done, repair to Crosby Place ;” and it will be remembered that after he has so strangely wooed and won the Lady Anne, Gloucester asks her “to presently repair to Crosby Place” ; while after his interview with Catesby whom he directs to sound Lord Hastings in reference to his own designs on the throne, he says, “At Crosby Hall there shall you find us both,” meaning himself and his *Fidus Achates*, Buckingham. Here, too, in the Great Hall Richard was acclaimed as king at that carefully packed meeting, the spirited representation of which may be seen in Mr. Sigisimund Goetze’s mural painting in the Royal Exchange.

The next owner of the mansion was Sir Bartholomew Read, who occupied it during his year of office as Lord Mayor, in 1501 ; and he was succeeded in its tenancy by Sir John Best, who subsequently sold it to Sir Thomas More, probably about 1514 or the following year.

By a curious coincidence, or perhaps the fact was due to his residence in a place identified with the usurper, Sir Thomas More, wrote here his *Life of Richard III.*, and if the date of his first occupation of the place is correctly assumed as being 1514 or 1515, then it is probable that he also wrote his *Utopia* within its walls, that famous book being first published in 1516. Two years later More was made Master of Bequests and Privy Counsellor by Henry VIII., and there seems no reasonable doubt but that the King, with whom at this period he was in high favour, must have visited him here. Five years later (1523) More, who was then Speaker of the House of Commons, sold Crosby Place to his friend Bonsevi, or as Stow calls him Bonvice, who some years later leased it to More’s son-in-law, William Roper, and also to his nephew William Rastell, but whether these two occupied it jointly or successively, is not clear ; however in the following reign they, together with their landlord, were driven abroad on account of religious persecution, and Crosby Place was therefore forfeited to the Crown ; under Mary, however, it was restored to Bonsevi.

The next possessor of the mansion was that Jeremiah (Stow calls him Germain) Croll who married a cousin of Sir Thomas Gresham, and who continued to reside here till 1566, when Alderman Bond, the most famous merchant adventurer of the day, who died in 1576, and was buried in St. Helens, purchased it for £1500 ; while in his possession, his Excellency, Henry Ramelius, Chancellor of Denmark, who came, as Ambassador to this country in 1586, was lodged here ; a circumstance that seems to have set the fashion of “putting up” illustrious foreigners here, probably on account of the beauty and size of the house ; for it having been again sold in 1594, to Sir John Spencer, who gave £2560 for it, a succession of envoys occupied it temporarily ; the Duc de Sully, in 1594 ; the Duc de Biron, in 1601 ; M. de Rosney, who was entertained

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here by Sir John Spencer, in 1603;¹ and the Russian Ambassador, in 1618. In connection with the Duc de Biron's stay here, a letter from the Lord Mayor to the Lords of the Council is extant, acknowledging the receipt of their letter, enclosing a petition from the upholsterers and others for an allowance for furnishing the Duke Byron (*sic*) and his train with stuffs, saddles, &c., and requesting them to excuse the City from this service, as they were hardly pressed for payment of the money demands made upon them in the service of the State.²

Sir John Spencer, who was one of those knighted on the occasion of Queen Mary's accession, was known as "rich Spencer" from the amount of his wealth, which is said to have approached a million sterling, an enormous sum in those days; he was Lord Mayor of London in 1594, in anticipation of which event probably he purchased Crosby Place earlier in that year. Under Spencer the mansion flourished exceedingly, for he not only enlarged and beautified it, adding "a most large warehouse near thereunto," but also kept open house here for a number of years. As Sir John had no son, his daughter was heiress to his immense wealth; but in the very year of her father's mayoralty, she eloped, it is said in a baker's basket carried on the shoulders of her lover,³ with Lord Compton, from Canonbury Tower, which Sir John had bought from Thomas, Lord Wentworth, in 1570; and which he used as a suburban residence. The father was furious, and determined to disinherit his wilful offspring. In this emergency the young couple besought the Queen's intercession, when her Majesty, who always had a soft heart for such escapades, hit on the following expedient to reconcile father and daughter. She invited, in 1601, Sir John to be fellow-sponsor with her, at the christening of a boy, who, she said, was the firstborn of a young couple who had married for love. The old man replied that as he had now no heir he should like to adopt the child, whereupon, at the ceremony, the Queen bestowed the name of Spencer on the infant, and afterwards informed Sir John that he had stood godfather, and had promised to adopt, his own grandson; whereupon reconciliation, joy, and gladness!⁴

Sir John continued to reside at Crosby Place till his death, in March 1609, when a remarkable funeral took place, the details of which are preserved in a letter from Mr. Beaulieu to Mr. Trumbull, dated the 22nd of the same month.⁵ "Upon Tuesday the funerals of Sir John

¹ See note in Nichol's *Progresses of James I.*, vol. i. pp. 159-60. ² *Remembrancia*, p. 409.

³ Agnes Strickland says this occurred in the thirty-sixth year of Elizabeth's reign, but Doyle, in his official *Baronage*, gives the date of the marriage as June 14, 1600.

⁴ *Histories of Noble British Families*, by Henry Drummond.

⁵ Winwood's *Memorials of State*, vol. i. p. 136; also Sir Egerton Brydges' *Memoirs of the Peers of England*, pp. 460-61.

Spencer were made, where some thousand men did assist, in mourning cloaks and gowns," writes Beaulieu, "amongst which were 320 poor men, who had every one a basket given them, stored with the particular provision set down in this note enclosed, *e.g.*, a black gown, four pounds of beef, two loaves of bread, a little bottle of wine, a candlestick, a pound of candles, two saucers, two spoons, a black pudding, a pair of gloves, a dozen of points, two red herrings, four white herrings, six sprats, and two eggs; but to expound to you the mystical meaning of such an antic furniture, I am not so skilful as Œdipus, except it doth design the horn of abundance, which my Lord Compton hath found in that succession."

The correspondent goes on to indicate that the accession to such enormous wealth as Sir John had left, was at first likely to have unhinged Lord Compton's mind, and he speaks of him as having fallen into "a phrenzy"; this must, however, have soon passed off, for we find him in the following year holding responsible office; but scandal of a graver sort was rife, for it was asserted, apparently with no proof, "that he hath suppressed a will of the deceased's whereby he did bequeath some £20,000 to his poor kindred, and as much in pious uses."

Lady Spencer (her maiden name was Alice Bromfield) died just a year after her husband, and as she distributed between £13,000 and £15,000 amongst her friends, Lord Compton appears again to have become distracted, and this time the matter was so serious that Mr. Beaulieu¹ states that "the administration of his goods and lands is committed to the Lords Chamberlain, Privy Seal, and Worcester; who, coming the last week into the City, took an inventory, in the presence of the Sheriffs, of the goods (in Crosby Place), amongst which, it is said, there were bonds found for £133,000."² However, Lord Compton again recovered from the effects of too much wealth, as in 1617, we find him created Lord President of Wales.

During the tenancy of Crosby Place by Lord Compton, who was created Earl of Northampton, in 1618, the Countess of Pembroke, celebrated in Ben Jonson's famous epitaph, and well known for her love of literature and her patronage of literary men, resided for some time here, notably in 1609, although her death, which occurred on September 25, 1621, took place at "her house in Aldersgate Street." Nine years later, the 1st Earl of Northampton also died, not here, but at his lodgings in

¹ In a letter dated March 29, 1610.

² In a scarce little work entitled *The Vanity of the Lives and Passions of Men*, by David Papillon, 1651, it is stated that there was once a plot concocted by a Dunkirk pirate to carry Sir John Spencer to France, for the sake of the ransom it was hoped to secure. It was currently reported that Spencer died worth £800,000.

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the Savoy, under tragically sudden circumstances, thus related in a contemporary letter,¹ dated July 2, 1630: "Yesterday sevensnight, the Earl of Northampton, after he had waited on the King at supper, and had also supped, went in a boat with others to wash himself in the Thames, and so soon as his legs were in the water but to the knees, he had the colic, and cried out, 'Have me into the boat again, for I am a dead man'; and died a few hours after."

He was succeeded by his only son Spencer, whose advent into the world, as we have seen, brought about the reconciliation between Sir John Spencer and his daughter and son-in-law. He was a fine linguist and an accomplished courtier, and Clarendon calls him "a person of great courage, honour, and fidelity." Having an intimate knowledge of court ceremonial, he was, as we know from the diary of Sir John Finett, Master of the Ceremonies, frequently employed in the introduction of foreign envoys to the King whom, by-the-bye, he had, as Master of the Rolls, accompanied to Spain in 1623, when the Spanish match was on the *tapis*. He continued to reside at Crosby Place till within a few years of his death, which occurred at the battle of Hopton Heath, in 1643. But five years before that event the mansion was in the hands of the East India Company, who probably rented it, as its annual value was then stated to be £100.² Later it was leased to Sir John Langham, Sheriff of London, in 1642; and during the Civil Wars it was used as a house of detention for political prisoners; Sir Kenelm Digby, Sir John Jacob, and Sir George Whitmore being among those incarcerated here for refusing to contribute money for the service of the Parliament.

Sir John Langham's son, Sir Stephen Langham, subsequently continued to occupy it; and it was during his time that a great fire broke out here which so seriously damaged the mansion that it was never afterwards occupied as a private residence. Under Charles II.³ the Great Hall was used as one of those meeting-places of sectarianism that sprang up all over London,⁴ and the congregation continued to meet here till 1769, when it removed to Southwark. About one hundred years previously the houses in Crosby Square had been built on the ruins of that portion of the mansion destroyed by fire; and the magnificent hall practically alone remained to indicate the stateliness of the original building. This Great Hall has been

¹ Given in Peck's *Desiderata Curiosa*.

² MS. preserved in Lambeth Palace; quoted in *London Past and Present*.

³ From 1678 to 1687 "The grand office of the Penny Post" was held here; and in 1700 the East India Company occupied again a portion of the Great Hall for a year or two. *London Past and Present*.

⁴ As early as 1618 we find Sir Robert Naunton writing to the Lord Mayor and stating, *inter alia*, that the Council had heard of a "confluence of loose people about Crosby House upon a Conventicle of anabaptists there assembled." *Remembrancia*, p. 453.

desecrated beyond all example. It was used as a packer's warehouse from 1810 to 1831, during which period its then proprietor, Mr. Strickland Freeman, removed all the stonework pillars and ornamental masonry of the council chamber to his seat at Henley, and says Allen,¹ "with the most barbarous taste erected a dairy with them!" The twelfth Duke of Norfolk made better use of the opportunities that then presented themselves, for he was so delighted with the beauty of the roof that he had drawings made of it, and built the banqueting-room at Arundel on its model. There is no doubt but that, at about this time, much of antiquarian and historical value as regards the fabric, was removed by enthusiastic collectors who found it was not difficult to persuade the ignorant custodians of the place to part with many relics.

When the lease of the packing firm ran out, public attention was directed to the state of the Great Hall and what little remained of other parts of the once stately mansion, with the happy result that the interior was carefully restored and the frontage to Great St. Helens rebuilt; the Bishopsgate Street front, although erected in the old style, formed but a magnificent forgery, as it was no part of the original building. The first stone of the new work was laid in 1836, and six years later the Hall was reopened by the Lord Mayor.

In the same year it was leased to what was thereupon termed the Crosby Hall Literary Institute, and when this ceased to exist in 1860, the Great Hall was used as a wine merchant's warehouse. In 1868 it was converted into a restaurant, in which capacity we all remember it; and hurrying waiters attended to the wants of city clerks, on the spot where once the great Sir Thomas More had sat; where the crown of England had been offered to the Duke of Gloucester; and where "Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother," had surrounded herself with, perhaps, the first literary salon ever held in this country. And now "glorious Crosby Hall," as Baron Bunsen called it, so far as the city is concerned, is as much a thing of the past as Troy or Babylon!

In very early days many of the houses of the nobles of the time were called "Inns"; thus at the end of Silver Street, once stood NEVILLE'S INN, the town house of John, Lord Neville, in the reign of Edward III., which, in Henry IV.'s reign, passed to Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, and in 1558, became the property of Lord Windsor, being then called Windsor Place; while in Warwick Lane was situated the inn or house of the Beauchamps, Earls of Warwick, from whence the street took its name. This house was once the residence of the king-maker, and to show that

¹ *History of London*, vol. iii. p. 156.

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the place was capable of sustaining and lodging the almost princely retinue that usually attended that great man, we have Stow's description of his coming hither in 1458, "with 600 men all in red jackets embroidered, with ragged staves before and behind," who were lodged in Warwick Inn, where "there was often six oxen eaten at a breakfast, and every taverne was full of his meate ;¹ for hee that had any acquaintance in that house, might have there so much of sodden and roaste meate, as he could pricke and carry upon a long dagger."

Another branch of the great family of Nevills, had their town house in the heart of the city, which was known as ABERGAVENNY or BURGAVENY HOUSE, at the north end of Ave Maria Lane, and was the residence of Henry Nevill, fourth Baron Abergavenny, who was one of the Commissioners appointed to preside at the trial of Mary, Queen of Scots, in 1586, and who died two years later. According to Stow the great house "builded of stone and timber," originally belonged to John de Bretagne, who had been created Earl of Richmond by Edward I., and who died in 1334. Later the place was known as Pembroke Inn,² having passed into the possession of the Earl of Pembroke, of the Hastings line, in the reign of Edward II., and was eventually the town residence of that John de Hastings, who married Margaret, youngest daughter of Edward III., as well as of his son, another John de Hastings, the third Earl of Pembroke, who died in 1389, having married Elizabeth, daughter of John, Duke of Lancaster ; so that Pembroke Inn had at one time almost a claim to be considered a royal residence. If, indeed, Stow is correct in stating that it was also the house of the Earl of Pembroke in the fourteenth year of Henry VI.'s reign, then it actually was a royal palace for a time, for the Earldom of Pembroke had been bestowed, in 1414, on the celebrated Duke Humphrey, fourth son of Henry IV., who died in 1446 ; and with the earldom went, almost as a matter of course, the property, including the London house.

It appears to have come later into the hands of Sir Nicholas Bacon, for Mr. Wheatley quotes from a letter of his to Matthew Parker, afterwards Archbishop, dated 1558, in which he asks the latter to come and see him "at Burgeny House in Paternoster Row." In 1611, the property was purchased by the Stationers' Company, which had been incorporated in 1557, for use as their hall ; and they enlarged and otherwise brought it up to date to suit the requirements of the headquarters of a great City Company ; it was, however, destroyed in the Great Fire, and the present hall erected on its site in 1670.

¹ Meaning that the taverns around were keeping supplies ready for the Earl.

² Stow.

Warwick Court, nearly opposite Chancery Lane, in Holborn, preserves the memory, if nothing else, of a mansion that formerly stood on its site, known as WARWICK HOUSE, the residence of the Earls of Warwick, but which from a passage in a lease of some ground adjoining granted by the Corporation of Gray's Inn to Charles, Earl of Warwick, in 1665, and quoted in Douthwaite's *History of Gray's Inn*, is shown to have been originally known as Allington House, the residence of Mrs. Allington.

Warwick House is one of those that I cannot claim, from ignorance of its size, &c., as a private palace, but, inasmuch as it was the home of the Earl of Warwick, who fought on the Parliamentary side during the Civil Wars, and was in every respect a remarkable man, I think its inclusion here may be in some sort justified.

Lady Warwick died here on January 16, 1646, and was buried in the church of St. Lawrence, near the Guildhall. Later Pepys dined here on one occasion (March 3, 1660) with Lord Sandwich, the Earl of Manchester, Lord Fiennes, Lord Berkeley, and Sir Dudley North; and from the passage in the *Diary* where the event is recorded, I gather that the place then belonged to the Earl of Manchester; while a curious circumstance proves it later to have been the residence of Lord Clare, for Burnet relates how William, Lord Russell, on his way to execution, passed the house, and "observing all shut up there, asked if my Lord Clare was out of town," to which the Bishop replied that "he could not think any windows would be open there on this occasion."¹

Another mansion that stood somewhat to the east of Warwick House was Brooke House, which immediately adjoined Furnival's Inn to the west, about 120 feet from Gray's Inn Road, the memory of which is preserved in Brooke Street and Greville Street, which run through the site of the house and its gardens which extended at the back of the buildings.²

BROOKE HOUSE was originally known as Bath House, having been, according to Stow, "of late for the most part new built" (which seems to indicate an earlier owner still of whom all trace is lost), by William Bouchier, Earl of Bath, who married Elizabeth, daughter of the second Earl of Bedford, in 1583, and died on July 12, 1623.³ It was afterwards in the possession of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, the "brave gentleman" mentioned by Sir Robert Naunton in his *Fragmenta Regalia*, and who was also described as "servant to Queen Elizabeth, counsellor to King

¹ Quoted in *London Past and Present*.

² Those curious in such matters can locate the various old houses of London with the help of Ogilby's splendid plan of 1677, where they are clearly indicated in many instances.

³ Nicholas Stone, however, records, in his diary for the year 1622, making "a diall for my Lord Brooke in Holbourn, for the which I had £8, 10s.," which seems to indicate that Lord Brooke had acquired the house before Lord Bath's death.

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James, and friend to Sir Philip Sidney." After holding a number of important offices under two sovereigns, and being on intimate terms of friendship with them both, besides sustaining an unblemished character during a peculiarly difficult period for preserving one, Lord Brooke fell a victim to one of his own servants, who assassinated him at Brooke House, on September 30, 1628.

Two years later the mansion was prepared, at the expense of the Crown, for the reception of the French Ambassador, probably by some arrangement with Lord Brooke's executors; but, in any case, it seems never afterwards to have been occupied by the Greville family. Among later events connected with it, the christening of Sir Arthur Haslerigge's infant daughter in 1635, and the lodging here of the French Ambassadors, "where they were entertained at the charge of His Highness," in 1658, are recorded, as is the sitting here of the "Brooke House Committee," which had been appointed, in 1668, to examine into the expenditure of certain moneys granted by Parliament to Charles II. for the ostensible purpose of prosecuting the war with Holland, but which seem, as was not then unusual, to have been employed by his Majesty in more peaceful projects. We find Pepys, on December 18th, wending his way thither, and carrying with him by order, the "Contract-books, from the beginning to the end of the late war." "I found him" (Colonel Thomson), says the Diarist, "finding of errors in a ship's book, where he showed me many, which must end in the ruin, I doubt, of the Comptroller."

This was not Pepys's earliest visit here, however, for on the preceding 3rd of July, he writes that he attended here for the first time on that day, and remained long with the Commissioners and found them "hot set on the matter," but he adds, "I did give them proper and safe answers."

Burnet tells us how deeply Charles felt this "Brooke House business" which he "resolved to revenge."

With these *data*, the short history of Brooke House comes to an abrupt termination. It is probable that, like so many other fine houses, it gradually fell into decay and was after a time used for commercial purposes before being altogether demolished.

If there be any doubt about the importance of Warwick House, or Brooke House, there seems to be little regarding two other mansions which once stood in Holborn; SOUTHAMPTON HOUSE and HATTON HOUSE.

The former was the home of the great family of the Wriothesleys, Earls of Southampton, and the industrious Stow gives a *resumé* of its history in the following words:—

"Beyond the bars (Holborn Bars) had ye in old time a Temple built

by the Templars, whose order first began in 1118, in the 19th of Henry I. This Temple was left and fell to ruin since the year 1184, when the Templars had built them a new Temple in Fleet Street, near to the river of Thames. A great part of this old Temple was pulled down but of late in the year 1595. Adjoining to this old Temple was some time the Bishop of Lincoln's Inn, wherein he lodged when he repaired to this City. Robert de Curars, Bishop of Lincoln, built it about the year 1147. John Russell, Bishop of Lincoln, Chancellor of England in the reign of Richard III., was lodged there. It hath of late years belonged to the Earls of Southampton, and therefore called Southampton House. Master Ropar hath of late built much there; by means whereof part of the ruins of the old Temple were seen to remain, built of Caen stone, round in form as the new Temple at Temple Bar."

This extract shows us that there was an adventitious interest attached to the great house, in that it was practically erected on the foundations of the Templars' earlier structure, some remains of which were shown to Mr. Cunningham by a Mr. Griffith in 1847, notably the walls and flat-timbered roof of what was called the "chapel" of the house.

According to Strype, the mansion was conveyed in fee to Lord Southampton, who was Lord Chancellor in the reign of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., and who was created an Earl by the latter monarch, at whose coronation he bore the sword of state. Lord Southampton died in 1550, and was succeeded by his son Henry, who married Mary, daughter of the first Viscount Montagu, and died in 1581. His second son, who inherited the titles and estates, was attainted in 1601, for complicity in Lord Essex's plot. He was the friend and patron of Shakespeare, who, as all the world knows, dedicated his *Venus and Adonis* to him, and was not improbably a frequent guest at Southampton House. An earlier plot, well known as Babington's, which had for its object the murder of Elizabeth, the release of Mary Queen of Scots, and a general rising of the Roman Catholics, was partly concocted within the walls of Southampton House, where the conspirators were accustomed to meet to mature their nefarious plans.

On the accession of James I., the dignities that Lord Southampton had forfeited by attainder, were restored to the Earl; and in the Calendar of State Papers is a record of a Bill, which James ordered to be prepared, confirming certain privileges to him, as well as extending "the liberties of Southampton House from Holborn Bars to the Rolls in Chancery Lane." The Earl died in 1624, and was succeeded by his second son, whom Clarendon describes as "in his nature melancholick and reserved in conversation." He apparently fell somewhat on bad times financially, for he

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is said to have asked the permission of Charles I. to pull down Southampton House and to build tenements on its site, "which would have been much advantage to him, and his fortune hath need of some helps";¹ but though the King brought the petition before his Council, and recommended its being agreed to, "telling their lordships that my Lord of Southampton was a person whom he much respected," the petition was dismissed.

During the Civil Wars a well is said to have been found by a soldier near this mansion, which had the power to heal the blind and the lame! What it could not do was to save the old house from the destruction which took place three or four years after the discovery of the well's singular properties, although fragments of the structure were in existence as late as 1850.²

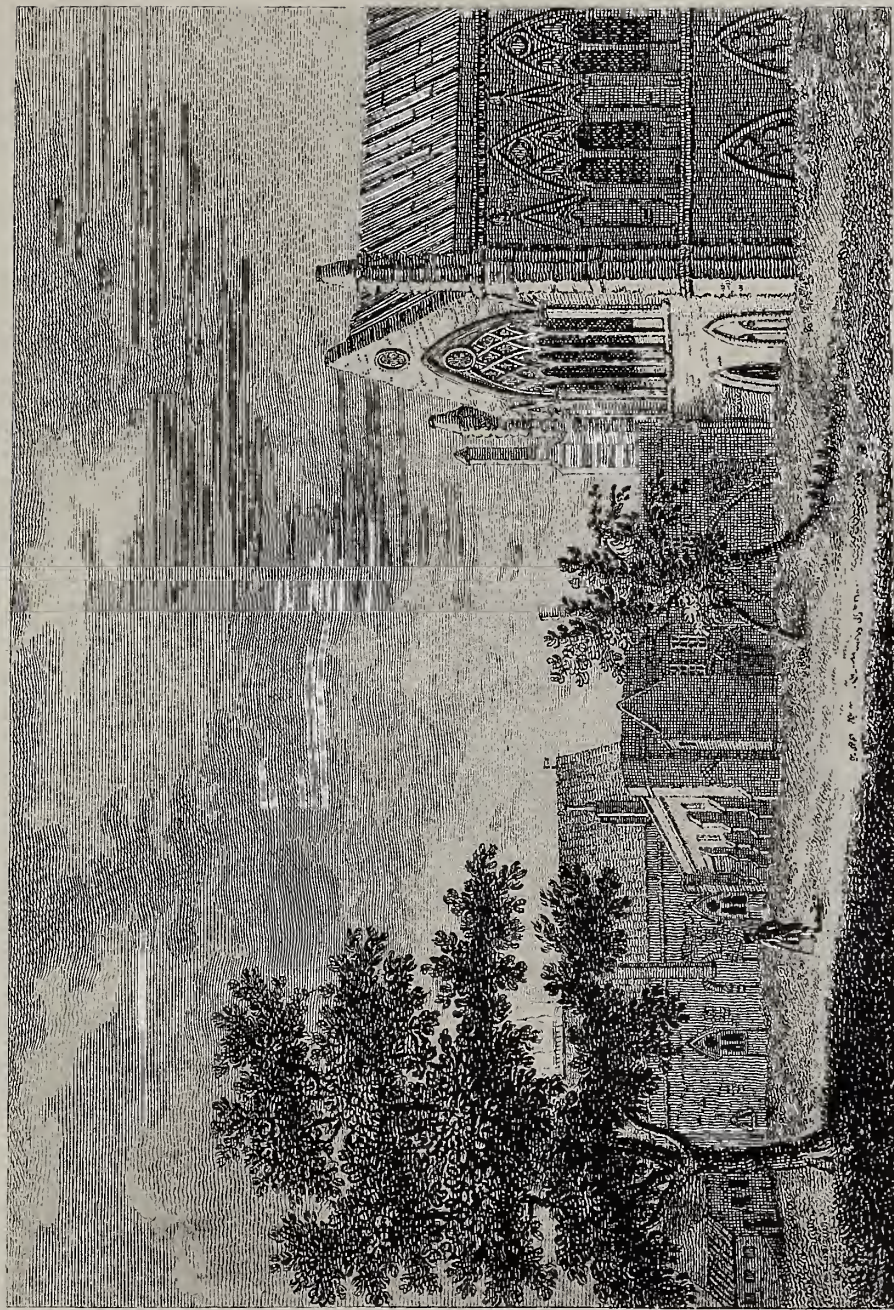
HATTON HOUSE stood nearly opposite St. Andrew's Church, on the site of Ely House or Inn, once the residence of the powerful Bishops of Ely,³ where in 1399 "Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," breathed his last, and referred to, it will be remembered, in that passage in *Richard III.*, where the usurper beseeches the Bishop to send for some of the strawberries growing in his garden there. The history of Ely Place need not detain us here however;⁴ pass we therefore to the year 1576, when Sir Christopher Hatton, Queen Elizabeth's "dancing Chancellor" and intimate friend, obtained a twenty-one years' lease of the gate-house and some portions of the buildings in the outer courtyard, together with the garden and orchard adjoining. The conditions of the lease would seem curious and anything but exacting so far as the rent was concerned, for this consisted merely of "a red rose, ten loads of hay, and £10 per annum," did we not know that royal pressure had been brought to bear on Cox, then the Bishop, who, however, as some set off for his sacrifice was allowed the privilege for himself and his successors of walking in the garden and culling therefrom twenty bushels of roses yearly. The peremptory letter sent by Elizabeth to Cox to enforce these terms has been long considered a forgery, although quoted by Agnes Strickland, but its phrasing: "Proud Prelate, you know what you were before I made you what you are; if you do not immediately comply with my request, by God! I will unfrock you," is highly characteristic of Elizabeth's drastic methods of persuasion.

¹ Letter of Gerrard to Lord Stafford, March 23, 1636.

² Archer, in his *Vestiges of Old London*, mentions, and gives a drawing of, an old staircase once in Southampton House, and says that other remains such as cornices and mouldings were in the Blue Posts Tavern. For the later Southampton House, see chapter iii.

³ For an interesting account of old Ely Place, see Brayley's *Londiniana*, vol. i. pp. 223-231.

⁴ It is not within my scheme to mention the old Episcopal palaces in London, which can hardly be considered in the light of private dwellings.



Wm. & G. 1874, by S. Hopper.

Ely House, London. Pl. 2.

ELY HOUSE, AFTERWARDS HATTON HOUSE, HOLBORN.

R. Godfrey Sc.

On part of the grounds, which consisted of "an irregular parallelogram, extending north-west from Holborn Hill to the present Hatton Wall and Vine Street, and east and west from Saffron Hill to nearly the present Leather Lane,"¹ Sir Christopher erected a stately pleasure-house for himself, although Ely Place itself appears still to have been used for Episcopal purposes.

There is little doubt but that the Queen must frequently have visited her minister at Hatton House, as we know from Lord Talbot's testimony that when he was once ill, before he had come to reside here, she went to see him daily. Hatton died here on November 20, 1591, and according to Stow, was buried in St. Paul's "under a most sumptuous monument." He had long been suffering from an incurable disease, but at the time popular imagination traced the cause of his death to grief occasioned by Elizabeth's peremptory demand for repayment of the £40,000² he is said to have owed the Crown; if this was an aggravating cause of his illness, her Majesty seems to have repented of her severity, for she frequently went to see her dying favourite, and as one of her biographers³ says, "endeavoured by her gracious and soothing speeches to revive his failing spirits."

After Sir Christopher's death, his widow, on whom the property had been settled, continued to reside here; and when she subsequently married and quarrelled with Sir Edward Coke, the great lawyer, she succeeded in preventing him from entering the place. They fought desperately over the custody of their only daughter, first one and then the other gaining possession of her, until at last James I. had to personally interfere to put an end to the scandal. Buckingham was anxious to secure the young lady and her money, she being a great heiress, for his brother Sir John Villiers, and Sir Edward Coke seems to have favoured the project, to which, as a matter of course, Lady Hatton objected; but when the match did take place, and a great entertainment was given at Hatton House in its celebration, Lady Hatton, whose objection had probably been overcome by the King's persuasive arguments, succeeded in preventing her husband from taking part in it. Nor was he present at a subsequent great feast given at Hatton House, to James and his court, in November 1617, when the King was in such merry mood, that besides drinking his hostess's health at very frequent intervals, he gave her, on taking his leave, half-a-dozen kisses, and knighted four of her friends.

The wily Ambassador of Spain, the Conde de Gondemar, was renting

¹ Brayley.

² The *Diary* of Walter Yonge contains an interesting reference to the subsequent circumstances attending this loan in 1616.

³ Lucy Aikin.

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Ely Place about this time, and though he did all he could to ingratiate himself with Lady Hatton, he found his labours thrown away; according to Howell, he asked her permission to use a back gate from the gardens of Hatton House; but "she put him off with a compliment," whereupon the Ambassador told the King "that my Lady Hatton was a strange lady, for she would not suffer her husband to come in at her fore-door, nor him to go out at her back door." It was during Gondemar's tenancy of the house, that a mystery entitled *Christ's Passion* was acted here, on Good Friday night, "at which," according to Prynne, in his *Histriomastix*, "there were thousands present."

When the Duke of Richmond died at Ely Place, in 1624, his body lay in state in Hatton House, and it is conjectured that he had been in treaty for the purchase of the place, for subsequently Lady Hatton complained to his widow of the terms of the bargain, whereupon the Duchess took her at her word and "left it on her hands, whereby she loses £1500 a year and £6000 fine."¹

These figures are interesting as indicating the size and importance of Hatton House; for £1500 a year in the time of James I. represented the rent of a mansion little short of palatial.

When the gentlemen of the four Inns of Court arranged the elaborate Masque which they exhibited before Charles I. and Henrietta Maria, at Whitehall, on Candlemas Day 1633, the committee of management held its meetings in Hatton House, and from here started the procession on its way to Whitehall. It had a political significance, and was hoped to counteract the effect of Prynne's *Histriomastix*. It cost no less than £21,000, and among the City Records, is a letter from the Lords of the Council to the Lord Mayor requesting him to see that the streets, especially Aldersgate Street, through which the procession was to pass, were well cleaned "and good and careful watch kept by constables."²

In the same reign, the See of Ely, in the person of Matthew Wren, the Bishop, made an attempt to recover the property which had been so arbitrarily taken by Queen Elizabeth; and the Court of Requests before whom the matter was brought in 1640, decided that the Bishop had a right to redeem the purchase, but subsequently Wren was committed to the Tower, and the House of Commons reversed this judgment. The matter again cropped up, in the time of Charles II., and Wren, who had been reinstated, made another attempt to regain possession, but without any success.³

During Cromwell's time, the place appears to have been used by the

¹ Calendar of State Papers, quoted in *London Past and Present*. ² *Remembrancia*, p. 357.

³ In Anne's reign the matter was finally settled by Bishop Patrick agreeing to forego all claims, on condition that £100 per annum should be paid the See of Ely in perpetuity. (Brayley's *Londiniana*.)

Government, both as a hospital and a prison; while the crypt of the chapel became a sort of military store. But the place had become so thoroughly dilapidated that it was deemed past repair, and some portion of it was removed, in 1659, for street improvements. Evelyn, writing on June 7 of this year, mentions a visit he paid here "to see ye foundations now laying for a long streete and buildings in Hatton garden design'd for a little towne, lately an ample garden." But it was not till 1772, that an Act was passed for the purchase of the property by the Crown, and the entire demolition of the remaining portions of the once splendid house.¹ It had been under contemplation to erect public offices on the site, but this design falling through, the property was sold to a Mr. Charles Cole, a well-known builder of that day, who took down all the buildings with the exception of the chapel, and formed Ely Place on their site in 1775.

One more ancient private palace in the City must be mentioned, because the extract I shall give from Stow's survey, shows it to have been, with its grounds, of very great proportions, and also because it was identified with the great family of Paulet.

WINCHESTER or PAULET HOUSE, in Austin Friars, was so named after William Paulet, first Marquis of Winchester, who, besides being the first nobleman on whom a marquise² was bestowed in this country, held various great offices of state under Edward VI. and Elizabeth, being in turn Treasurer of the Household, Lord Chamberlain, Lord President of the Council, and Lord High Treasurer, to mention but a tithe of his many dignities.

The mansion was erected on the site of the cloisters and gardens of the monastery of Augustine Friars, which had been bestowed on William Paulet, as he then was, by Henry VIII. at the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Paulet, who once described himself as a willow and not an oak, and thus accounted for his retention of his high offices for so long a time and under such difficult circumstances, resided in the house he had built, till his death in 1572.

Stow's description of the place is unusually minute and circumstantial. "East from the Currier's Row," he writes, "is a long and high wall of

¹ A perpetual annuity of £200 was settled on the See of Ely, and £6400 was also paid over, the larger portion of which was destined for the purchase of a part of the ground belonging to Clarendon House, in Dover Street, on which site a new Ely House (still standing) was to be erected as a town residence for the Bishop of that diocese. In the *Transactions of the London Archæological Society*, vol. v. p. 494 *et seq.*, is an interesting article on Ely Place, with plans and elevations, chiefly, however, connected with the chapel attached to it.

² He was so created on October 12, 1551.

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stone, inclosing the north side of a large garden adjoining to as large a house built in the reign of King Henry VIII. and of Edward the VI. by Sir William Powlet, Lord Treasurer of England. Through this garden, which of old consisted of divers parts, now united, was sometimes a fair footway, leading by the west end of the Augustine Friars' church straight north, and opened somewhat west of Allhallows Church against London Wall towards Moorgate; which footway had gates at either end, locked up every night; but now the same way being taken into those gardens, the gates are closed up with stone, whereby the people are forced to go about by St. Peter's Church, and the east end of the said Friars' Church, and all the great place and garden of Sir William Powlet to London Wall and so to Moorgate. This great house stretched to the north corner of Brode Street, and then turneth up Brode Street, and all that site to and beyond the east end of the said Friars' church."¹

A comparison of this description with a map of London will give an idea of the extent of ground covered by the mansion and its gardens.

The second Marquis made various additions and improvements to the place, but he died only four years after succeeding to the property, when it became the residence of his son, who used it as a town house till his death in 1598, when the fourth Marquis, being in straits for money, sold the property to John Swinnerton, who afterwards became Lord Mayor of London. The price asked, as we learn from a letter from Fulke Greville to the Countess of Shrewsbury, was £5000. Fancy such a sum now being offered with any success for a hundredth part of the area then sold!

It appears that Lady Shrewsbury² and Lady Warwick also lived in smaller houses on the estate, as Greville states that their abodes are included in the purchase; and he apprehends that they would neither care to be tenants "of such a fellow," as he terms honest Swinnerton.

The subsequent fate of the mansion appears to be unrecorded, but any one can see for himself the congeries of business premises that now exist on its site and that of its splendid gardens.

Considerably to the west, in Fleet Street, but yet within the precincts of the City, is the site of another famous old house, but there is nothing to-day in Salisbury Square, or Dorset Court as it was once alternatively called, to indicate that the town residence of a noble family once stood in

¹ Stow's *Survey of London*.

² It would appear that her house was for a time the town residence of the Talbot family, for a letter is extant from the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury, dated "From his House in Broad Street, 1st Dec. 1613." See *Remembrancia*, p. 159.

its precincts. Here, however, SALISBURY HOUSE was formerly situated. It took its name from the Bishop of Salisbury, whose palace it originally was. In Elizabeth's reign, however, it was exchanged with Lord Treasurer Buckhurst¹ "for a piece of land near Cricklade in Wilts." Seth Ward, who was Bishop from 1667 to 1689, told Aubrey this, and added that "the title was not good, nor did the value answer his (Buckhurst's) promise." To-day such an exchange could only be accounted for by some extraordinary pressure being brought to bear on the See of Salisbury to cause such a one-sided bargain, as it would now seem to us, to be concluded. Lord Buckhurst, who was created Earl of Dorset in 1604, had written here his tragedy of *Porrex and Ferrex*. According to Stow, he greatly enlarged the place with stately buildings, but he died in 1608, and his son, who succeeded him, also died in the following year. In the Calendar of State Papers is this entry: "March 13, 1609. Anne Lady Glenham sends documents to prove her right to Cecil House, intended by her father, Earl of Dorset, for herself and her children, which, on the death of her brother Robert, Earl of Dorset, she now claims." It was for this reason obviously that the following action on the part of the third Earl was necessary, for we find him obtaining a confirmation of the grant of the Manor "of Salisbury Court, together with Salisbury House, *alias* Sackville Place *alias* Dorset House, and divers messuages in St. Bride's and St. Dunstan's, on his compounding for defective titles," on March 25, 1611.

Here, in 1624, this Earl died, as his grandfather had done in 1608, when he was succeeded by his brother, that gallant gentleman of whom Clarendon speaks as being in his person "beautiful and graceful and vigorous," and to whom James Howell alludes in the lines :

"His person with it such a state did bring,
That made a court as if he had been king!"

He held many high offices under Charles I., and on the murder of his master he retired in deep grief to Dorset House, as it was then called, where he died in 1652.

The great house was subsequently pulled down, and a fine theatre was built from designs by Wren on its site, after the Restoration.

I could, of course, instance other great houses that have disappeared from the East End of London, but those I have mentioned are I think the only ones that from one cause or another may justly be said to properly come under the designation of private palaces, either from their size and

¹ Stow ; see also the author's *History of the Squares of London*.

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importance, or from the illustrious families with whom they have been connected and from whom they, in most instances, take their names.

As we proceed westwards we shall meet with a number of great houses bordering the banks of the river, and lying south and north of the Strand, until with Northumberland House, Charing Cross, the transition to those houses which once crowded together at Whitehall and other parts of the West End will be easy and appropriate.

Vila Bonae Arundelinae Londini, Septentrionem versus. 22



ARUNDEL HOUSE, STRAND.

CHAPTER II

GREAT HOUSES OF THE STRAND

NUMEROUS as were the great houses that at one time gave an air of distinction to the City, and in some cases, from their size and the importance of their owners, fell not far short of regal residences, they can hardly compare as a whole with the extraordinary series of noble mansions that once stood in the Strand, from Essex House on the site of what is now Essex Street to Northumberland House, which was the last of these great houses to survive to our own day, and which was finally demolished to make way for Northumberland Avenue.

These great residences were situated on both sides of the Strand, and some of them between it and the Thames, and if not actually abutting on the river, were at least connected with it by their spacious gardens; four of them, however, occupied that area now covered by Southampton and Burleigh Streets and the adjacent buildings and thoroughfares, and were known as Wimbledon, Exeter, Cecil, and Bedford Houses. The seven great mansions on the river side of the Strand were Essex,¹ Arundel, Worcester, Salisbury, Durham, York, and Northumberland Houses, and, as we can see, most of these Strand palaces preserved in their names the titles of the most powerful families of England. Many of them, however, had their genesis in the wealth and influence that were once the regular attributes to ecclesiastical dignity, but as the secular power of the Church gradually diminished after the fall of Wolsey and the suppression of the monasteries, many of these Episcopal palaces were granted to, or acquired in other ways by, the great nobles with whom their fortunes became afterwards identified, and it is on account of this that they properly take their place among the past private palaces of London.

If we take Essex House first, we shall preserve the continuity of these great houses from the Salisbury House which I have spoken of in the last chapter, for between that and Essex House no other noble mansion

¹ "There Essex's stately pile adorned the shore,
There Cecil's, Bedford's, Villiers', now no more."
GAY'S *Trivia*.

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existed so far as I am aware, the buildings and great gardens of the Temple occupying the intervening space.

ESSEX HOUSE, the site of which is still preserved in the name of Essex Street and Devereux Court, was in pre-Reformation days the palace of the Bishops of Exeter,¹ who leased the ground on which it stood from the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem who, as we know, owned much property here as the result of their successful rivalry with the Knights-Templars; at the Reformation the house and grounds were granted to William, first Lord Paget, one of the ablest of Henry's Secretaries of State, who afterwards helped Somerset to put aside the King's will on the accession of Edward VI. He died on June 10, 1563, at Drayton, but it is probable that his body was brought to Essex (then called Paget) House, as Machyn, in his *Diary*, gives some account of the heraldic decorations used at his funeral, evidently from personal observation.

Lord Paget, on obtaining possession of the house had enlarged it, but the next owner of the property, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, seems to have practically rebuilt it, according to a passage in Stow, and to have re-christened it Leicester House. Spenser, in his *Prothalamion* incidentally mentions Leicester House, and its great master, as well as his successor here, the Earl of Essex:

"Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gaynéd giftes and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell."

And he continues:

"Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder."

Lord Essex, who certainly did a good many things to excite "the world's wide wonder," put the coping-stone to his turbulent career of openly defying the Queen and her Government, by trying to rouse the populace against those, among them Sir Robert Cecil and Sir Walter Raleigh, whom he considered responsible for his loss of ascendancy over her Majesty. At Essex House he gathered together his adherents, and was blockaded in the mansion by the royal troops, who pointed their cannon against it from the roofs of neighbouring houses and from the tower of the Church of St. Clement Danes. Matters at last looked so desperate, and the ladies in Essex House were so overcome with terror, that Essex had perforce to surrender, and was thereupon carried a prisoner to Lambeth Palace, and later to the Tower, where he was shortly afterwards executed.

¹ Mentioned by Stow, who calls it "Excester House."

His widow, Lady Essex, only daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham, continued to reside here after his death ; and in November 1601, she and her mother-in-law jointly petitioned the Lord Mayor and Aldermen for "a continuance of the pipe of water which had been formerly granted to the Lord Admiral for the use of Essex House." This petition was apparently acceded to ; for seven years later, another communication is extant from the Lord Mayor, concerning the stoppage of this "quill of water," as it was termed ; the reason given being that the water in the conduits had become very low, and the poor were very clamorous for a better supply ; moreover "complaints had been made of the extraordinary waste of water in Essex House, it being taken not only for dressing meat, but for the laundry, the stable, and other offices, which might be otherwise served."¹

During the following reign, when the Elector Palatine came over, in 1613, to marry the Princess Elizabeth, he was lodged in Essex House, and in the Calendar of State Papers is preserved an interesting note of the arrangements made for the Prince's reception here :

"Memorial of what will be required for the tables of the Elector Palatine, viz., ten covers for his own table ; eighteen for the table of persons of rank ; the third table for the 14 pages is to be served with what is removed from the first ; and the fourth for the 24 valets, coachmen, &c., with what goes away from the second."

Although there appears by this to have been some sort of economy practised, it is on record that the wedding festivities amounted to no less than £100,000 !²

During this time the house belonged to the young Earl of Essex, afterwards the celebrated Parliamentary leader, as the title and estates forfeited by his father had been restored to him in 1603, when he was eleven years of age. The place, therefore, must have been rented by the crown for the purpose of a lodging for the Elector Palatine. It remained the Earl's London residence during his life, and in consequence of the notorious behaviour of his two wives,³ was alluded to in Cavalier songs as "Cuckolds Hall." It was at Essex House that he received the congratulations of the Corporation after the Battle of Newbury, in 1643, although that contest was an indecisive one. But before this (in 1639), a somewhat curious

¹ *Remembrancia*.

² See the author's *Life of Charles I.*, 1600-1625, p. 65, for some details of the ceremonies. Sir Anthony Weldon, in his *Court of King James I.*, speaks of a "sumptuous feast being given at Essex House by Mr. James Hay, afterwards Lord Hay, in the early years of James's reign.

³ He married first, in 1606, Lady Frances Howard, second daughter of the first Earl of Suffolk, from whom he was divorced in 1613 ; and secondly, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Paulet, in 1631.

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arrangement had been come to between Lord Essex and the Earl of Hertford, by which the latter obtained a lease of ninety-nine years of *a half* of Essex House on the payment of a sum of £1100, as a premium.

The Earl of Essex died here, on September 14, 1646, and Pepys records coming to Essex House to see his body lying in state. It is probable that Lord Essex's portion of the mansion continued empty till the Restoration, when the fourth Earl of Southampton, the Lord Treasurer, is known to have lived in it for a time; he died in 1667, and shortly afterwards, the house was taken by Sir Orlando Bridgman, the Lord Keeper; and on January 24, 1669, he was visited here by Charles II., an incident thus noticed by Pepys: "By and by the King comes out (from Whitehall), and so I took coach, and followed his coaches to my Lord Keeper's at Essex House. . . . a large but ugly house. Here all the officers of the Navy attended, and by and by were called in to the King and the Cabinet, where my Lord, who was ill, did lie upon the bed, as my old Lord Treasurer, or Chancellor, heretofore used to do; and the business was to know in what time all the King's ships might be repaired, fit for service."

It is uncertain how long Sir Orlando Bridgman inhabited Essex House, but according to Strype, Dr. Barebone, the great builder of the day, purchased the property, or more probably took over the remainder of Lord Hertford's lease, and, apparently in conjunction with others, pulled it down and built on its site. When this occurred I don't know, but as Dr. Barebone died in 1698, one can approximately fix the date of the demolition. Some portions of the original mansion were for a time left standing, and here the celebrated Cottonian Library was housed from 1712 to 1730, but in 1777 this last remaining part was pulled down. One interesting relic of the old place still exists in the so-called water-gate, or rather the two pillars and cornices belonging to it, which now stand at the end of Essex Street, and form an elaborate entrance to the flight of small steps leading to the Embankment.¹

According to an etching by Hollar, published in Ogilby and Morgan's *Plan of London*, the gardens of Essex House were of immense size and of very elaborate arrangement; they stretched from the back of the mansion to the water's edge, being bounded on the east by those of the Temple, and on the west by Milford Lane.

Nearly adjoining, on the other side of this lane, was the next great mansion about which I must say a few words, ARUNDEL HOUSE, the site of

¹ In Devereux Court, high up in the wall, is a bust of Lord Essex, attributed to Caius Gabriel Cibber, which also recalls the once famous owner of Essex House.

which is preserved in the thoroughfares named after the various titles of the great family to whom it belonged—Howard Street, Norfolk Street, and Surrey Street.

According to the plan to which I have just referred, the area covered by Arundel House and its gardens was even larger than that of the Essex House property, and the mansion itself, with its great courtyard and little town of outbuildings, was of correspondingly greater extent.¹

The main portion of Arundel House—Pennant, by-the-bye, more properly terms it Arundel Palace—stood about midway between the river and the Strand, while one wing stretched at right angles to the river bank. Like so many of these great houses, Arundel House was originally known as Bath's Inn, having formerly been the London residence of the Bishops of Bath and Wells. By an etching of Hollar's, we get a very misleading impression of the place, as his view obviously merely represents the servants' quarters, probably the original buildings of Bath's Inn, and the small chapel attached to them, and Pennant was evidently so misled, from what he says of the buildings as being, although covering much ground, "both low and mean." This error is the more curious, as he just before quotes the Duc de Sully who was lodged here during his embassy to England in the reign of James I., to the effect that Arundel House was one of the finest and most commodious of any in London; and another etching by Hollar of a view of London taken from the top of the house, shows a corner of a castellated building of considerable height looking down on the more humble part of the fabric.

In the reign of Edward VI., the property was granted to Lord Thomas Seymour, brother of the Protector, who had married Catherine Parr, and on her death had even aspired to the hand of the Princess Elizabeth. On his execution in 1549, the property was purchased by the fourteenth Earl of Arundel for £41, 6s. 8d., together, according to Strype, as if to increase our wonder at such a price for such a place, "with several other messuages, tenements, and lands adjoining."

It, however, appears to have still been known by its earlier name, for Machyn, on the 9th August 1553, speaks of the Bishop of Winchester going on that day "with my lord of Arundell to dener at Bayth plasse"; while on the 21st October 1557, the diarist records the death of "my lade the contes of Arundell at Bathe plase in sant Clement parryche with-out Tempylle-bare"; the lady in question being Mary, Dowager-Countess

¹ Ogilby's map shows that the grounds extended from Strand Bridge Lane (dividing them from Somerset House) to Milford Lane (the boundary between them and those of Essex House). They reached about 700 feet east and west, and had a depth of from 250 to 300 feet. This portion of Ogilby's map was reproduced in enlargement by J. T. Smith in his *Antiquities of Westminster*.

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of Sussex, daughter of Sir John Arundel, of Lanherne, whom Lord Arundel had married as his second wife, in 1545. The Earl himself died in 1580, and his grandson and successor,¹ dying abroad fifteen years later, Arundel House, as it had now begun to be called, was in 1603, granted to Charles Howard, created Earl of Nottingham in 1597, and better known as the Lord Howard of Effingham, who commanded, as Lord High Admiral, the English fleet against the Armada.

By an arrangement with James I., however, Lord Nottingham in 1607, gave up the place, and the King restored it to Thomas Howard, whom he had reinstated in his titles of Earl of Arundel and Surrey in 1603, the Calendar of State Papers containing, under date of December 23, 1607, a "grant to the Earl of Arundel and Robert Cannefield, in fee simple, of Arundel House, St. Clement Danes, without Temple Bar, lately conveyed to the King by the Earl of Nottingham."

This Earl of Arundel will be forever famous as the collector of those wonderful Arundel marbles, with which his name is indissolubly connected. Van Somer painted the portrait of the Earl and his Countess,² and the backgrounds to these portraits represent respectively the statue and picture gallery at Arundel House as they were at that time.

Lord Arundel was the pioneer of that movement which had for its object the collecting and bringing into this country the relics of antiquity scattered about in Greece and Italy, uncared for and neglected. He had lived for some time in Rome, and had there been known for his lavish purchases of marbles and other antiquities. He pressed into his service, with the same object, that Sir Thomas Roe who was sent as Ambassador to the Porte, in 1621, and who employed agents to further his lordship's desires. But a more systematic search for these treasures was conducted, on behalf of the Earl, by William Petty, who was sent out in 1625, probably on behalf of the Duke of Buckingham, who was also smitten with a desire to pose as a connoisseur of art, having successfully attempted to share in Roe's discoveries.

Petty did well, and, in 1627, the first produce of his activity arrived at Arundel House in the shape of marbles, and a number of valuable

¹ He was son of the fourth Duke of Norfolk, who was beheaded in 1572, for his intrigues on behalf of Mary Queen of Scots. When Bernardine Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, was in this country, Mr. Dymoke's house in Fenchurch Street was allotted to him as a residence, but he wanted to have Arundel House; and in the *Remembrancia* some letters between Walsingham and the Lord Mayor on the subject are alluded to. The Queen appears to have settled that Mendoza should be lodged in the City as first arranged by the Lord Mayor.

² Lady Alatheia Talbot, third daughter of the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury, whom he married in 1606. Vandyck also painted their portraits in one piece, which picture was engraved by Vosterman for Lord Arundel. Vanderborcht was another engraver patronised by the Earl, certain pictures in whose collection he engraved.

inscriptions, the latter of which were deciphered by the learned Selden, and the results published in a volume known as the *Marmora Arundeliana*, in the following year. A second instalment was in this year sent over by Petty, who seems to have been as energetic on Lord Arundel's behalf as Gavin Hamilton, over a hundred years later, was on behalf of the then head of the Petty family, the Marquis of Lansdowne.

The example set by the Earl was, as I have said, imitated by the Duke of Buckingham, and after his assassination, the Earl of Pembroke, Charles I. himself, and others followed Arundel's splendid lead; but, unfortunately, the death of the Earl, in 1646, and the outbreak of the Civil War, struck a serious blow at the cultivation of art, and in the troubles that ensued the wonderful collections at Arundel House were dispersed; and although some of them were again brought together, the almost culpable indifference of the Earl's grandson (the fourth Earl, of the Howard branch) continued the work of the fanatic Roundheads, who sold for a mere song these invaluable relics, as they sold Charles I.'s pictures and medals. Many of the inscriptions are luckily preserved at Oxford; some of the marbles were rescued by Lord Pembroke, but this wonderful collection which might have been now, as for a few years it was, one of the artistic glories of this country, was, as a whole, irrevocably spoilt.

But Lord Arundel was not only a collector of such things, he was an enlightened patron of art in its other branches, and an evidence of this is the fact that he invited the great engraver, Hollar, to this country, in 1636, and gave him a permanent lodging in Arundel House,¹ a favour he also showed to Vanderborcht, a portrait-painter, to whom Evelyn once sat for his picture here in 1641. He also lodged Robert Walker, the portrait-painter, within its walls for a time, and as Cornelius Boll is known to have made a view of Arundel House, when he was in this country, it is not improbable that he, also, was one of Lord Arundel's protégés; well might Evelyn describe this liberal patron as "the Mæcenas of the politer arts, and the boundless amasser of antiquities."

The statues and larger pieces were arranged in the galleries at Arundel House; the marbles, with Greek and Latin inscriptions, and the bas-reliefs were affixed to the walls of the pleasure gardens; while the mutilated fragments were sent to a summer garden which Lord Arundel owned at Lambeth; it would seem, however, that the Earl's original intention had been, according at least to a settlement he executed in 1628, to divide the collection, which consisted of no less than 373 statues, 128 busts, and 280

¹ Hollar etched his well-known view of London from the roof of Arundel House.

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various marbles and inscriptions, between Arundel Castle and Arundel House, to be preserved in these two palaces as heirlooms.

The Earl was, however, a collector of other artistic objects besides marbles, and his collection of books which his grandson, on Evelyn's advice, presented to the Royal Society; his cabinet of coins and medals, which afterwards came into the possession of the Earl of Winchilsea; his cameos and intaglios, which were left by the Duchess of Norfolk to her second husband, Sir John Germaine,¹ and the various pictures he collected, or had painted for him by Vandyck and Rubens and others, and particularly his princely offer of £7000 to the Duke of Buckingham for an "Ecce Homo" by Titian, prove the catholicity of his taste and his excellent judgment.

In Cromwell's time Arundel House was relegated to the reception of illustrious strangers who visited this country; and on the Restoration, the fourth Earl of Arundel, to whom the Dukedom of Norfolk was restored, took up his residence here. He contemplated rebuilding the mansion, and among Wren's designs preserved in All Souls College, Oxford, is a plan for a new mansion on the site of Arundel House; but the Duke's interest in the house did not, as we have seen, extend to its contents, and Evelyn, visiting the place in 1667, and sadly remembering its former splendour, speaks thus: "When I saw these precious monuments miserably neglected and scattered up and down about the garden, and other parts of Arundel House, and how exceedingly the corrosive air of London impaired them, I procur'd him (the Duke) to bestow them on the University of Oxford. This he was pleas'd to grant me, and now gave me the key of the gallery, with leave to mark all those stones, urns, altars, &c., and whatever I found had inscriptions on them that were not statues."

Evelyn had always been a frequent visitor at Arundel House, and as a member of the Royal Society he had also attended the meetings which after the Great Fire were regularly held here, at the invitation of the Duke, who was a great deal more interested in science than in art, until the Society met, in 1673, at Gresham College at the invitation of the Corporation of London. Pepys, as a member of the Society, was also a visitor on these occasions, and gives some amusing accounts of experiments, &c., which took place there, and the interesting people he met.

The Duke of Norfolk died in 1677, and his brother and successor demolished the house in the following year,² when the property was developed into streets and tenements, which scheme had apparently been contemplated earlier, for a Private Act, of 1671, is entitled: "An Act for building

¹ Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*.

² As the next house we shall come to is Worcester House, it is interesting to remember that this Duke married, as his first wife, Lady Anne Somerset, elder daughter of Edward, 2nd Marquis of Worcester, famous as an inventor.

Arundel House and tenements thereunto belonging," unless, indeed, this simply refers to the contemplated rebuilding of the mansion.

The whole of the estate was not, however, developed in 1678, for in 1689 another Act was passed for "building into tenements the remaining part of Arundel ground as now enclosed."¹

Beyond Somerset House to the west, and close by the Savoy, formerly stood another of the palaces for which the Strand was once famous. This was WORCESTER HOUSE, nearly on the site of the present Beaufort Buildings, which had in pre-Reformation days belonged to the See of Carlisle.

In Aggas's map, dated 1560, it is shown as situated between the Palace of the Savoy and Durham Place, and immediately abutting on the Strand, while its grounds extended to the river. It was given by the Crown to the first Earl of Bedford, and was first known as Russell or Bedford House; when, however, the family built another palace on the other side of the Strand, which we shall presently come to, Bedford House passed, presumably by purchase, into the hands of the Somerset family. I have been unable to find out definitely the exact date of this transfer, but as the Russell family procured a grant of the land on the other side of the Strand on which they built another house, whither they moved from the Russell or Bedford House I am speaking of, in 1552, it is probable that the sale to the Somersets occurred not long after that period; certainly I think we may date it from the time of the third Earl of Worcester, who died in 1589, in which case it became the town house of his son and successor, the fourth Earl, and of his grandson, the fifth Earl (created a Marquis in 1642), during whose residence his wife, a granddaughter of the second Earl of Bedford, gave birth, in 1601, to Edward Somerset, Lord Herbert, afterwards second Marquis of Worcester, and celebrated for his famous *Century of Inventions*, in which he anticipated some of the most remarkable discoveries of the nineteenth century.

From Faithorne and Newcourt's bird's-eye view of London, dated 1658, Worcester House is shown as a relatively small mansion compared with the pretentious pile of Salisbury House next to it on the west, but as Dircks, the great authority on the life of the second Marquis of Worcester, says, it was "a building of some importance from its magnitude and position as well as from the princely character of the noble possessor of the property," and in its gardens about midway between the mansion and the river, and close to Salisbury House, there appears, on the plan, another building even larger than the house itself, which might excite our curiosity,

¹ It is interesting to know that, in 1635, the celebrated "Old Parr" died, aged 152, in Arundel House, whither he had been invited in order to be introduced to Charles I.

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did not the following curious story, preserved by Stow, account for its singular position. Says the antiquary: "There being a very large walnut-tree growing in the garden, which much obstructed the eastern prospect of Salisbury House, near adjoining, it was proposed to the Earl of Worcester's gardener by the Earl of Salisbury, or his agent, that if he could prevail with his lord to cut down the said tree, he should have £100. The offer was told to the Earl of Worcester, who ordered him to do it and take the £100; both which were performed to the great satisfaction of the Earl of Salisbury, as he thought; but, there being no great kindness between the two Earls, the Earl of Worcester soon caused to be built in the place of the walnut-tree a large house of brick, which took away all his prospect."

When the King and the Parliament first came to blows, a guard was set up, by order of the latter, on Worcester House, and the place was ordered to be searched "for persons suspected of high treason"; in which way did the King's enemies aim blows at his throne and person in his very name. Two years later, it was ordered "that the iron seized at Worcester House be forthwith sold"; while in the year following the murder of the King, Worcester House became a *depôt* for the security of treasure seized by the Parliament, as is proved by a Resolution dated January 10, 1650. It was also used for Parliamentary Committees, and was fitted up for the reception of the Scotch Commissioners. Later the Parliament sold it to the Earl of Salisbury, according to Whitelocke, "at the rate of Bishops' lands," and it is probable that the purchaser was eagerly looking forward to pulling down the objectionable building erected by Lord Worcester; but, in 1659, "an act for settling Worcester House in the Strand upon trustees, for the use of Margaret, Countess of Worcester, during the life of Edward, Earl of Worcester," &c., was brought into Parliament, and a subsequent Bill (March 14, 1659) confirming the matter was passed, and the Countess obtained possession on the 25th of the same month. All the compensation she appears to have received was the sum of £700; being £300 for the year as a sort of rent, and £400 in settlement of all claims against unlawful detention.

On the Restoration, Lord Worcester offered the house to Lord Clarendon by a letter, dated June 9, 1660,¹ in which he says: "Be pleased to accept of Worcester House to live in, far more commodious for your Lordship than where you now are, though not in so good reparation, but such as it is, without requiring from your Lordship one penny of rent." Although Clarendon does not appear to have accepted this generous offer, he did rent Worcester House, paying £500 a year for it, and it was here,

¹ Given by Dircks in his *Life of Lord Worcester*.

on September 3, 1660, "between 11 and 2 at night," that the Duke of York was married to Anne Hyde.

Shortly after that event, Evelyn went to see the bride, "the marriage being now newly owned," and having kissed her hand, as did the Lord Chamberlain, and the Countess of Northumberland, he muses on this "strange change," and wonders "if it can succeed well"?¹

The other great Diarist of the period, Pepys, was also frequently here seeing Clarendon on the business connected with the Navy Office, and while waiting on one occasion in the "Great Hall," he remarks that it was "wonderful how much company there was to expect him"; while at another time, while Mr. Secretary is awaiting my lord, "in comes the King in a plain and common riding suit and velvet cap, in which he seemed a very ordinary man to one that had not known him."²

Here, too, occurred that curious instance of second sight, which the second Lord Clarendon related thus to Pepys, in a letter, dated May 27, 1701: "One day—towards the middle of February 1661—2, the old Earl of Newburgh came to dine with my father at Worcester House, and another Scotch gentleman with him, whose name I cannot call to mind. After dinner, as we were standing and talking together in the room, says my Lord Newburgh to the other Scotch gentleman, who was looking very steadfastly upon my wife, 'What is the matter, that thou hast had thine eyes fixed upon Lady Cornbury ever since she came into the room? Is she not a fine woman? Why dost thou not speak?' 'She's a handsome lady, indeed,' said the gentleman, 'but I see her in blood.' Whereupon my Lord Newburgh laughed at him; and all the company going out of the room, we parted; and I believe none of us thought more of the matter; I am sure I did not. My wife was at that time perfectly well in health, and looked as well as ever she did in her life. In the beginning of the next month she fell ill of the small-pox; she was always very apprehensive of that disease, and used to say, if she ever had it, she would dye of it. Upon the ninth day after the small-pox appeared, in the morning, she bled at the nose, which quickly stopt; but in the afternoon the blood burst out again with great violence at her nose and mouth, and about eleven of the clock that night she dyed almost weltering in her blood."

Lord Clarendon remained at Worcester House until the Great Fire, when he removed to Berkshire House,³ St. James's, for a time, until Clarendon House, Piccadilly, was ready for his reception. After this, Worcester House seems to have been used merely for certain public

¹ *Diary*, December 22, 1660.

² *Ibid.*, August 19, 1661.

³ For an account of this house see the chapter on Bridgewater House, which stands practically on its site.

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functions, for which its Great Hall was well adapted, and among these the Installation of the Duke of Ormond as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, in 1669, and that of the Duke of Monmouth to the like office at Cambridge, five years later, are recorded.

Pennant says the house was demolished by the first Duke of Beaufort, but Thornbury states that it was burnt down in 1695. It may be that some kind of conflagration did take place, but this probably only served as the pretext for pulling down the place, as we know that the Duke of Beaufort had purchased a house at Chelsea in 1682.¹ As in the case of all the palaces which once lined the Strand, Beaufort House, when destroyed, was replaced by streets and houses,—the latter, in this case, being known as Beaufort Buildings.

As I have noted when relating the story of Lord Worcester's walnut-tree, SALISBURY or CECIL HOUSE as it seems to have been alternatively called, adjoined Worcester House on the west and in height, at any rate, dwarfed that mansion considerably. It was erected by Sir Robert Cecil, Elizabeth's "little Great Secretary," as Sir Anthony Weldon calls him, who afterwards became first Earl of Salisbury, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Queen herself being present at the house-warming which took place on December 9, 1602. John Manningham notices the event in the diary he kept for this and the following year. "On Monday last," he writes, "the Queen dynded at Sir Robert Cecils newe house in the Stran. Shee was verry royally entertained, richely presented, and marvelous well contented, but at hir departure shee strayned hir foote. His hall was well furnished with choise weapons, which hir majestie tooke speciale notice of"; and he goes on to tell of the "devices" with which the Queen was received according to the custom of the period. But, although this entertainment was given, the mansion was in anything but a complete state; indeed its owner was still at work on it six years later; and there is extant some very interesting information on the subject. Thus, on August 10, 1608, and in subsequent letters, Thomas Wilson writes to Lord Salisbury (as Cecil had then become²), pointing out to him "the difference of cost between Canterbury stone and Caen stone for the works at Salisbury House"; and in September of the same year, one Leonard Lawrence tells Wilson that he had procured some sixty or seventy loads of the former material from the inner gate at Canterbury which had apparently been demolished for the purpose; but that he had proceeded no further

¹ Timbs is probably more correct when he says that the great house was taken down, and a smaller one erected on its site, and that it was the latter which was destroyed by fire in 1695.

² He was created an Earl by James I., in 1605.

because "the townspeople keeps so much ado"—as well they might! However, the difficulty seems to have been overcome, for later he tells Wilson that the demolition is complete, and that he has shipped more stone to London. Another trouble, however, arose owing to the difficulty in procuring workmen, and those that were at last enlisted had to be sent all the way from Newcastle where they were taken off work on the castle for the purpose.

These facts are to be found in the Calendar of State Papers, where, under date of September 1610, are certain specifications by a Mr. Osborne for the erection of a portico at the river end of the garden of Salisbury House; the architect not improbably being the John Osborn who was also a carver of some note at that period. The second Lord Salisbury, who succeeded his father, in 1612, apparently found the great house too large for his requirements, or else thought it necessary to retrench; in any case, he caused the building to be divided; one portion subsequently being known as Great, and the other as Little, Salisbury House. The former he kept as his own residence, the latter he let to "persons of quality," among them being that third Earl of Devonshire, the pupil of Hobbes, who was lodged in a room here and otherwise befriended by his noble patron; while another was apparently Sir Thomas Edmunds, Treasurer of the King's House, who is found writing to the Lord Mayor in June 1618, and requesting "that a quill of water from the City's pipe for his house (Cecil House) in the Strand, which had been formerly allowed to the previous tenants, might be restored."

In the time of the third Earl of Salisbury¹ the property was let on building leases, the smaller mansion pulled down, and streets and houses formed; while on the site of the house itself, the so-called "Middle Exchange," running from the Strand to the river, was erected, but not proving a success, was later, together with Great Salisbury House, demolished, and Cecil Street formed on the ground they both occupied.

As I do not include among "private palaces" the great ecclesiastical residences in London, except where their private interest outbalances their ecclesiastical claims,² as is the case with some I have already mentioned, I am perforce obliged to pass by Durham House with a mere allusion; for,

¹ In the Calendar of State Papers, under date of March 1673, is this entry: "Licence to James, Earl of Salisbury, to build on the grounds of Salisbury House in the Strand, and the gardens, &c., belonging to them."

² Of course, as a matter of fact, as Howell in his *Londinopolis* states, from Salisbury or Dorset Houses in Fleet Street to Whitehall, all the great mansions built on the Thames were episcopal palaces, at one time or another, with the exception of the Royal Palace of the Savoy, and Suffolk House.

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although at various times it was granted to private people and even used as a residence for foreign notabilities, it practically throughout its career continually reverted to its rightful owners, the Bishops of Durham. Had, however, Philip, Earl of Pembroke, who obtained what was left of the once splendid house—for it had been much encroached upon both as to the actual fabric and the gardens—seen fit to carry into execution the scheme he had formed for building another magnificent mansion on its site, for which purpose John Webb, the pupil of Inigo Jones, prepared plans still extant, I should have had a subject made to my hand; as it is, I must pass on to York House which adjoined Durham House to the west.

YORK HOUSE was the most splendid of the many splendid mansions that formerly stood in such profusion in this part of London. Its ecclesiastical traditions were, it is true, short-lived, but they clustered around the great northern Archbishopric; its associations with Lord Chancellor Bacon give it a double claim to be connected with politics and literature; its apotheosis under the magnificent Buckingham raised it almost to a level with the Royal palace close by; its very decline and fall were so sudden that they but emphasised its former glory. It is, too, the only one of the Strand residences (for Northumberland House was properly at Charing Cross) of which I am able to give some more or less detailed account of the interior decorations and the splendid contents; and so far as the latter are concerned, as the profuse favourite who brought them together was one of the pioneers of art-collecting in this country, the record of the artistic objects once in York House is a part of the history of art, and such as Vertue and Walpole have preserved the memory of the most important of them, while the biographers of Rubens and Vandyck have necessarily had much to say about the patron of these painters and his remarkable accumulation of pictures.

The London residence of the Archbishops of York was originally at Suffolk House, in Southwark, a house built by Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, in the reign of Henry VIII., which Queen Mary presented to the See in consequence of York House at Westminster, better known as Whitehall, having been wrested from Wolsey by Henry VIII. Not long afterwards, however, the then Archbishop, Heath, obtained, according to Strype, "a licence for the alienation of this capital messuage of Suffolk Place; and to apply the price thereof for the buying of other houses called also Suffolk Place, lying near Charing Cross." But Heath appears to have been the only Archbishop who lived in what was then called York House, as from 1561 to 1606, it was apparently leased as an official

residence to the Lord Keepers of the Great Seal,¹ or as Walford states, was exchanged by Archbishop Matthews, in the reign of James I., with the Crown for certain manors in the north.

One of the most notable of the Lord Keepers who, in the course of time, took up his residence at York House, was Sir Nicholas Bacon, who became Lord Chancellor in 1558; and here, on January 22, 1561, was born his more famous son, Francis Bacon. Hepworth Dixon, in recording this event, gives the following vignette of the place, as it appeared at that time: "This house, a fief of the Crown," he says, "stood next to the palace, from which it was parted by lanes and fields; the courtyard and the great gates opening to the street; the main front, with its turrets, facing the river. The garden, of unusual size and splendour, fell by an easy slope to the Thames, which communicated with it by stairs, and commanded (a view) as far south as the Lollards' Tower, as far east as London Bridge. All the gay river life swept past the lawn; the shad-fishers spreading their nets, the watermen paddling gallants to Bankside, the city barges rowing past in procession, and the Queen herself, with her train of lords and ladies, shooting by in her journeys from the Tower to Whitehall stairs."²

The size of these gardens is confirmed by old plans of London; but the proximity of York House to Whitehall is somewhat poetically exaggerated, while the little picture, drawn by E. M. Ward, which is reproduced on the title-page of Dixon's book, is as purely imaginary as certain other historical scenes drawn by that otherwise clever artist.

York House was more closely connected with Francis Bacon's life than any other place; "it was the scene of his gayest hours and of his sharpest griefs, of his magnificence and of his profoundest prostration."³ Here his youth was spent; here his father died, in 1579; here Lord Keeper Puckering also died, in 1576; and here Lord Keeper Egerton lived for at least a year; and during all this time Bacon was in touch with the mansion. In York House the inquiry into the Irish Treason was held, and, in 1588, Lord Essex attempted to obtain possession of the place, the custody of which was, according to Norden, given to him, and which was later to become his prison when, in October 1599, he was placed under the surveillance of Egerton. In James I.'s reign the inquiry into the mysterious death of Overbury, which occurred in 1613, and for which Mrs. Turner, who had administered poison to him with a fiendish perseverance, was hanged, while Lady Essex and her lover the Earl of Somerset,

¹ A letter from Lord Keeper Ellesmere, dated 29th July 1612, from York House, is extant.

² *Life of Lord Bacon.*

³ *Ibid.*

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who were the real instigators of the crime, were merely imprisoned,¹ was also held here.

Shortly before Francis Bacon became Lord Keeper and Chancellor, he took up his residence in his old home ;² and the affection he had for it is illustrated by a reply he made to the Duke of Lennox, who was anxious to get possession of the place : "York House is the House wherein my father died, and wherein I first breathed, and there will I yield up my last breath, if so please God and the King will give me leave."³

In 1620, he sent a copy of his *Novum Organum* to the University of Cambridge, from here, and in the following year the charges, which had been impending over his head, were formulated, and from York House he addressed his long and famous letter of confession and apology to the peers. Hither, too, came the Sergeant-at-Arms to desire his attendance at the Bar of the House, but found "the Lord Chancellor sick in bed"; and on May 1, 1621, the great seal was taken from him here. For some weeks after the sentence passed on him, Bacon remained quietly at York House; indeed he seems to have only cared for that and his books, for it had been pointed out to him, by Sir Edward Sackville, that if he but consented to give up the place, "the town were yours and all your straitest shackles shaken off." This adumbrates what was in the wind. The Duke of Buckingham was anxious to possess the ground on which the mansion stood, in order that he might, with the help of Inigo Jones, erect a sumptuous palace, and had Bacon fallen in with his views, there is very little doubt that Buckingham's great influence would have cleared away other difficulties from his path. But the favourite was hardly the one to put up with the opposition of a fallen statesman, and what he could not procure by fair means he took other methods to accomplish, and on May 31, 1621, officers of the Crown came to York House, arrested the ex-Chancellor, and carried him off to the Tower. The indignant letter he wrote to Buckingham caused his release the same night, and he was allowed to return to York House to sleep, but the next day he left, and went to Sir John Vaughan's residence at Parson's Green. Even then he made an appeal to be allowed to return to the place that was so dear to him, but Buckingham would hear nothing of the sort, and James suggested his retiring to his country seat at Gorhambury, whither, rather reluctantly, he went. Some months later, he was allowed to come up to York House,

¹ See the facts in *Truth Brought to Light by Time*, a scarce pamphlet on the subject.

² He was made Lord Keeper in 1618, and in the preceding July, 1617, is a letter from him to the Lord Mayor, desiring that a lead pipe from the City's mains might be laid on for supplying York House with water.

³ He however died, not even in his own country house, Gorhambury, whither he had retired after his disgrace, but at Witherborne, Lord Arundel's place close by.

presumably to collect, and arrange for the removal of, his belongings, but he remained so unconscionable a time there, that the Duke grew nervous, and Bacon received warning that he must at once return to the country.

How exactly Buckingham became possessed of York House is a little obscure; on the one hand, in the Calendar of State Papers, there is an entry to the effect that "Viscount St. Albans (Francis Bacon) has filed a Bill in Chancery against Buckingham, on account of the non-performance of his contract for taking York House," which would seem to indicate that the Duke had arranged to purchase it from the ex-Chancellor, or rather to purchase Bacon's interest in it; on the other, Gerbier states that Buckingham "borrowed" it from Tobie Matthew, Archbishop of York until the latter was able "to accept as good a seat as that was in lieu of the same." However, the matter as between the varied interests of the Crown, the Archbishop, and Bacon, was subsequently settled by the Duke's obtaining possession, as Laud thus records in his *Diary*, for May 15, 1624: "The Bill passed in Parliament for the King to have York House in exchange for other lands. This was for the Lord Duke of Buckingham."

On obtaining possession, Buckingham at once proceeded to demolish the mansion, and to erect on its site a large house, not apparently as a residence, but for the housing of his wonderful collection of pictures, as well as for the reception of the innumerable foreign ambassadors whose interest it was to pay him attention; as well as for those great festivities which he was wont to give to the King and Court.

It would appear that the palace projected by the imagination of the favourite and the genius of Inigo Jones, was never actually completed, but if it was to have been proportionate with the splendid water-gate that still exists—the only surviving relic of it, at the bottom of Buckingham Street, and perhaps the most beautiful piece of work that even Inigo Jones ever designed—we can imagine to what a scale of regal magnificence the completed palace would have attained.

The interior walls were decorated with large mirrors, which were at that time of considerably greater rarity and value than they are to-day; and in order to cover those portions of the building which were not thus lighted up, the Duke purchased from Rubens the great assemblage of pictures and other artistic effects which the painter had collected for the adornment of his home at Antwerp. The price paid for the whole of these beautiful objects was one hundred thousand florins, a great sum in those days; but when we know that among the pictures were nineteen by Titian; seventeen by Tintoretto; thirteen by Rubens himself, and a like number from the brush of Paul Veronese; twenty-one by Bassano, and

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three each by Raphael and Leonardo; besides many other fine works, together with antiques, gems, &c., the price seems to our modern ideas of relative value, ridiculously inadequate.

Gerbier indirectly indicates that these treasures must have been crowded together in bewildering profusion, for he says¹ that Charles I. once remarked that he had seen at York House "in a roome not above 35 foot square, as much as could be represented as to sceans in the great Banqueting Room of Whitehall."

With regard to the general splendour of the place and its contents much contemporary evidence is extant; for instance here is what Peacham in his *Compleat Gentleman* has to say on the matter: "At York House, the galleries and rooms are ennobled with the possession of those Roman Heads and statues which lately belonged to Sir Peter Paul Rubens, that exquisite painter of Antwerp; and the garden will be renowned so long as John de Bologna's 'Cain and Abel' stands there, a piece of wondrous art and workmanship. The King of Spain gave it to his Majesty at his being there (in 1623), who bestowed it on the late Duke of Buckingham."

When the Marshal de Bassompierre came over to England, on his embassy, in 1626, he, as a matter of course, paid a visit to Buckingham at "Jorschaux," as he calls it, which was the nearest attempt to spell York House he could compass, and one who had been familiar with all the courts and great houses of Europe, could speak of it not only as being "extremely fine," but as "more richly fitted up than any other" he ever beheld! To the same observer we owe some details of one of those magnificent fêtes with which Buckingham loved to exhibit at once his taste and his ostentation, for Bassompierre, in one of his despatches, departing for the moment from more serious matters, describes the vaulted rooms; the ballets which accompanied the supper; the various changes of courses, interspersed by theatrical displays, and the beautiful music; and he also notes the Duke's contrivance of having a turning door, only admitting one person at a time, in order to obviate undue pressure.

In the Sloane MSS. is a letter which contains this notice of another of these entertainments: "Last Sunday, at night, the duke's grace entertained their majesties and the french Ambassador at York House with great feasting and show, where all things came down in clouds, amongst which one rare device was a representation of the French King, and the two Queens, with their chiefest attendants, and so to the life, that the Queen's majesty could name them. It was four o'clock in the morning before they parted, and then the King and Queen, together with the

¹ "Discourse on Building," quoted in *London Past and Present*.

French Ambassador, lodged there. Some estimate this entertainment at five or six thousand pounds.”¹

But Buckingham did not spend all his substance on such ephemeral delights; as we have seen, he bought Rubens's wondrous collection; he was, besides, a patron of that great man as well as of Vandyck, and others, and Gentileschi is known to have worked for him at York House, where was a ceiling representing the nine Muses in a circle by this painter, who also painted the Villiers family in one group, and a picture, not less than eight feet by five, of a Magdalen lying in a grotto, which also hung here; while the splendid group of the Duke surrounded by his family, the work of Honthorst, now at Hampton Court, and the many portraits of him by other painters of the reign of James and Charles, show Buckingham to have been a splendid patron of art, even if, as his enemies were fond of asserting, vanity was its mainspring.

Balthazar Gerbier, whom the Duke employed, not only in the production of his princely entertainments, but also in the collection of works of art, once wrote to his employer in these terms: “Sometimes, when I am contemplating the treasure of rarities which your excellency has in so short a time amassed, I cannot but feel astonishment in the midst of my joy. For out of all the amateurs, and princes, and Kings, there is not one who has collected in forty years as many pictures as your Excellency has collected in five.”²

In 1645, the Parliament ordered all “the superstitious pictures in York House,” by which they indicated all those that represented sacred subjects, to be sold, but, before this order could be enforced, some of them were sent out of the country, and were purchased by the Archduke Leopold, including the magnificent Titian for which Lord Arundel had once offered the Duke £7000, as I have before mentioned.

York House itself was presented to Fairfax, whose daughter the second Duke of Buckingham, made for ever memorable by Dryden's lines, married in September 1657, and thus the property reverted to the Villiers family, Cromwell giving the Duke permission to reside at York House, on the understanding that he was not to quit it without the Protector's leave. Of course, Buckingham tried to override the arrangement, and was promptly lodged in the Tower; a proceeding that caused high words between his father-in-law and Cromwell.

¹ This, it is probable, was identical with the banquet mentioned by Walter Yonge in his *Diary*, as costing £4000, and during which he says “the sweet water which cost £200 came down the room as a shower from heaven,” and notes “the banquet let down in a sheet upon the table, no man seeing how it came.” November 1626. Bassompierre also gives an account of this great feast.

² Quoted in Bishop Goodman's *Memoirs*.

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The second Duke of Buckingham died in 1687; but according to Evelyn, York House had begun to be neglected even as early as 1655, when he went to see it. For some years afterwards it was let as a temporary embassy; thus, in 1661, the Spanish Ambassador rented it; when Pepys once walked through it, during Mass, and was disappointed with the gardens; and in 1663, the Russian Ambassador was here, on which occasion the Diarist made another visit, and was chiefly pleased with "the remains of the noble soul of the late Duke of Buckingham appearing in his house, in every place, in the door cases and the windows," as he quaintly puts it. It was on the occasion of York House being occupied by the Russian Envoy that the Earl of Manchester, then a joint Commissioner for the office of Earl Marshal, wrote to the Lord Mayor, desiring that the water-pipes connected with the mansion should be repaired.

I do not know what the Spanish and Russian Ambassadors paid for the use of York House, but Mr. Wheatley mentions the sum of £1359, 10s. as being, in 1668, the rental of the place; four years later, however, the Duke sold it to certain undertakers, as building speculators were then called, named Eldyn, Higgs, and Hill, who demolished the mansion, and on its site and that of its fine gardens built those streets which still, by their names, perpetuate the Duke of magnificent memory, and in which his name and title is thus curiously preserved: George (Street) Villiers (Street), Duke (Street) Of (Alley) and Buckingham (Street).¹

It is said that the second Duke made it a condition with the purchasers that he should be thus commemorated, which is satirised in a line in the so-called *Litany of the Duke of Buckingham*—

"Calling streets by our name when we have sold the land,"

but it is probable that these names will always rather recall the splendour of the first Duke than the inconsistency of the second.

Before saying anything about Northumberland House, there remain three other palaces in the Strand which require some notice, although what is known of them is only sufficient to give us a more or less vague idea of their splendour. These mansions stood on the north side of the street, and the first of them, *i.e.* the most easterly, was WIMBLEDON HOUSE, which was erected probably at the close of the sixteenth century by Sir Edward Cecil, third son of the first Earl of Exeter, who was created Viscount Wimbledon in 1625, and who died thirteen years later. Inigo Jones is

¹ Hollar made a drawing of the house, which is preserved in the Pepysian Library at Cambridge, and is reproduced in Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata*.

said to have designed the mansion, which Strype calls "a very handsome house." The chief portion of it was destroyed by fire in 1628, and what remained was pulled down in 1782. It was erected on part of the Exeter House property, at the north-east corner of the present Wellington Street, but little or nothing seems to be known of it beyond these few facts, and it is rather curious that its name is not preserved in any of the streets which now cover, or are adjacent to, the site where it once stood; perhaps we may from this conclude that although a large house, it was not on the scale of magnificence of the other mansions in the Strand which have nearly all received in this way some posthumous record. One of the chief of these was BURLEIGH, CECIL, or EXETER HOUSE as it was variously termed, which once stood on the site of Burleigh and Exeter Streets and their adjacent houses.

The genesis of Exeter House was sufficiently humble, for on this spot originally stood a rectory-house attached to the Church of St. Clement Danes, "with a garden and close for the parson's horse." In the reign of Edward VI., however, this small property came into the hands of Sir Thomas Palmer, who pulled down the old buildings and "rebuilt the same of brick and timber very large and spacious,"¹ indeed in such a complete way that it was described as a magnificent house. Palmer, who was called "buskin Palmer," and was an adherent of the Duke of Somerset, was subsequently accused of high treason, and his property, including the mansion, was forfeited to the Crown. He had received a free pardon in February 1552, but on the 25th July 1553, he was sent to the Tower with, among others, the Duke of Northumberland, and on the following 19th of August was ordered to be hanged and quartered, a sentence which was changed to that of beheading; he suffered with the Duke and Sir John Gates three days later on Tower Hill.

Elizabeth granted the place to Sir William Cecil, who, according to Stow, "beautifully increased it"; while Norden² thus speaks of it under its new master: "The house of the ryght honourable Lord Burleigh, Lord High Treasurer of England and by him erected. Standinge on the north side of the Stronde, a verie fayre howse raysed with bricke, proportionable adorned with four turrets placed at the four quarters of the howse; within it is curioslye beautified with rare devises, and especially the oratory, placed in an angle of the great chamber. Unto this is annexed on the east a proper howse³ of the honourable Sir Robert Cecill Knight, and of Her Mats: most honourable Prevy Counsaile."

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, London Topography.

² Norden's Middlesex, Harleian MS. Quoted in *London Past and Present*.

³ This was Wimbledon House.

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Allen, in his *History of London*, quotes, as evidence of the princely style in which Lord Burleigh lived, the *Desiderata Curiosa*, where it is stated that his housekeeping charges when he was in residence were £40 to £50 a week for his London house alone. He kept no less than eighty servants, and at the same time had the great establishments of Theobalds and Burleigh on his hands, besides his heavy expenses at Court; while his almsgiving alone amounted to £500 a year, and his stables cost him 1000 marks yearly.

From old plans, Exeter House is shown as facing the Strand; its gardens extending from the west side of the garden-wall of Wimbledon House to the green lane, which is now Southampton Street.

Here Lord Burleigh was visited by Elizabeth, and in the diary he kept is this entry for July 14, 1561: "The Queene supped at my house in Strand before it was fully finished"; a circumstance also recorded by Machyn, who, however, places the event a day earlier thus: "The xiii. day of July—the same nyght the Queens grace whent from the Charterhouse by Clerkynewelle over the feldes unto the Savoy unto Master secretaire Syssele to soper, and ther was the Counsell and many lordes and knyghtes and ladies and gentyll-women, and ther was grett chere tyll mydenyght." The Queen came on another occasion to see Lord Burleigh here, and finding him suffering from gout made him sit in her presence, saying, "My Lord, we make use of you not for the badness of your legs but for the goodness of your head." There is also a tradition that once calling here, decorated with that elaborate headdress she was wont to affect, the servant asked her to stoop in going through a door, when she replied, "For your master's sake I will stoop," adding somewhat irrelevantly, "but not for the King of Spain."

Another entry in Lord Burleigh's *Diary* records the birth of his daughter Elizabeth here, on July 1, 1564; while in Massingham's *Journal* it is noted that Tarleton, who was a comedian of the period, "called Burley House gate in the Strand towards the Savoy, the Lord Treasurer's Almes gate, because it was seldom or never opened," in which remark I fear the actor allowed his love for a jest to get the better of his veracity, for, as I have pointed out, Lord Burleigh's benefactions to the poor were on a most lavish scale.

Burleigh died on August 4, 1598, and was succeeded by his son, Thomas Cecil, who was created Earl of Exeter in 1605, when the name of the house was changed from Burleigh to Exeter. I find the Lady Hatton, mentioned previously, living here in 1617, she probably having rented it; and in this year she entertained the King and Queen here, but true to her resentment against her second husband, Sir Edward Coke, she

would not permit him to be one of the company, although James himself desired his presence!¹

In 1623, when the "Spanish match" was still supposed to be a *fait accompli*, and James was expecting the Infanta over here, he desired to borrow Exeter House in order to instal some of her suite here. The first Lord Exeter had died in the February of this year, and the place was still let apparently to several people, for the second Earl, while complying in a hesitating way with the King's request, replied that "he could not find it in his heart to bid those in it begone, especially Lord Denny"; and he shifts the responsibility of giving them notice to the Lord Treasurer. The latter evidently arranged the business satisfactorily, for, on June 17, the Spanish Ambassador Extraordinary was conveyed with many coaches to Exeter House, which was richly furnished and decorated for his reception.²

The chapel attached to the house seems to have been fitted up as a Roman Catholic place of worship for the use of Henrietta Maria, in the next reign, at which time the Duchess of Richmond was occupying the mansion itself; and it was in this chapel that Evelyn, attending the celebration on Christmas Day 1657, was, with others, detained by the Puritan soldiers, on the ground that none should any longer observe the superstitious time of the nativity; but after being examined in a room in Exeter House by certain officers, was allowed to depart, they dismissing him "with much pity for his ignorance"!

After the Great Fire, the house was rented by the Government for the holding here of the Court of Arches and Prerogative Courts which the burning of Doctors' Commons had left homeless. Later still, the first Earl of Shaftesbury was living here; and here, in 1671, was born his grandson, the third Earl and author of the famous *Characteristics*. Lord Shaftesbury had married, *en second nocces*, Lady Francis Cecil, daughter of the third Earl of Exeter, in 1650, which may be sufficient to account for his presence as an occupant of the house. He, however, removed to Thanet House in the City, in 1676, as I have before mentioned: but it was during his sojourn in the Strand that John Locke was a resident here, as he continued to be in Thanet House, in the capacity of tutor to Lord Ashley, and physician to the household, and while here he was engaged on his great work on the *Human Understanding*.

With the departure of Lord Shaftesbury, the history of this interesting old house closes, for soon afterwards it was pulled down, and its site

¹ We know Lady Hatton entertained their Majesties at Hatton House, in November of this year; so it is probable that she had just taken Exeter House when she was again thus honoured.

² *Calendar of State Papers.*

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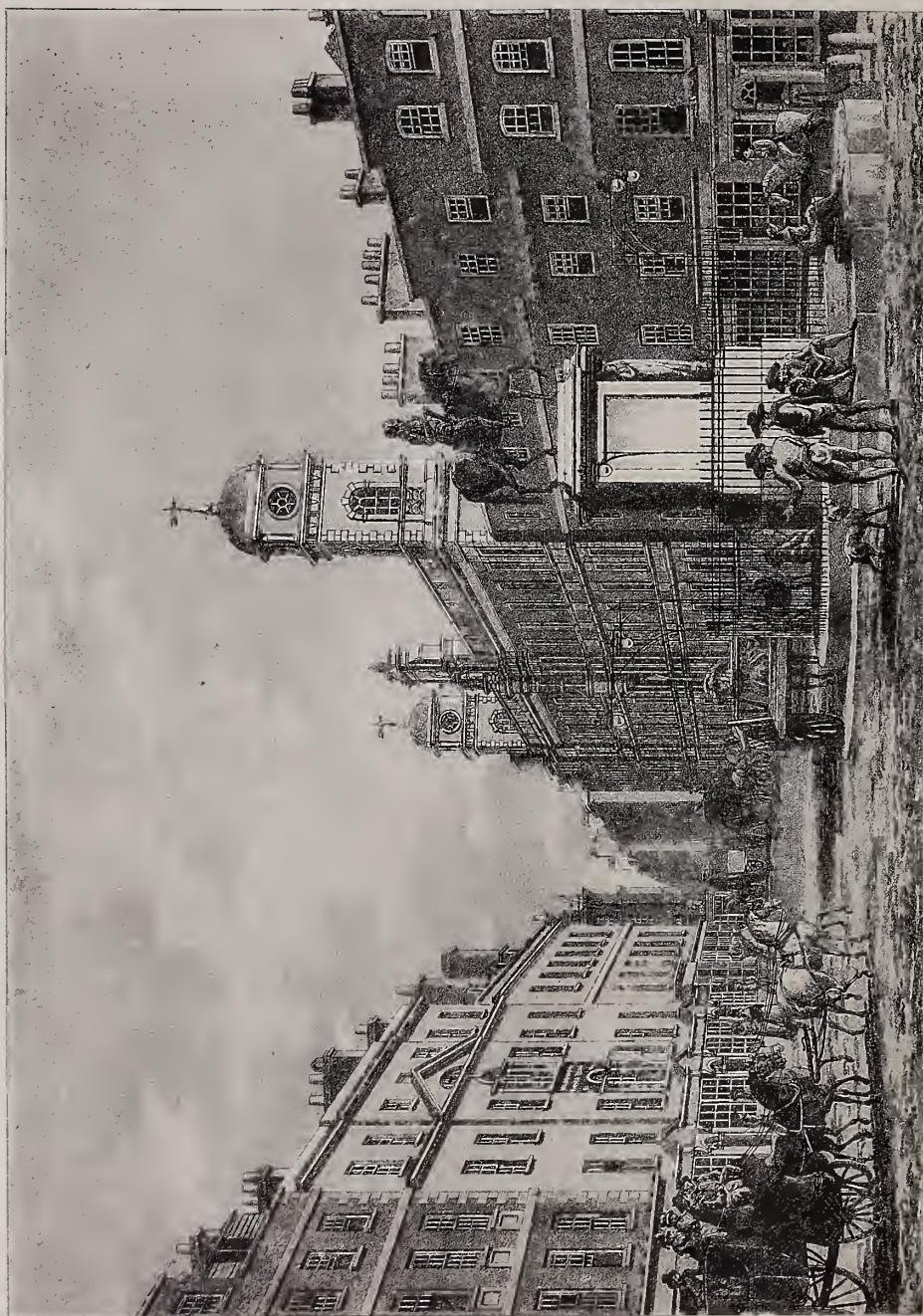
covered with streets and buildings, among the latter being the once well-known Exeter 'Change. In 1855, the second Marquis of Exeter sold the property on the site of Exeter House for something over £50,000.

Although Sorbière in his *Voyage en Angleterre* (1666) speaks of old BEDFORD HOUSE in the Strand, which stood a little west of where Southampton Street runs, as "Le Palais de Bethfordt," I don't know that it should rightly be included among residences with this high-sounding title. Strype calls it "a large but old built house with a great yard before it for the reception of carriages; with a spacious garden having a terrace-walk adjoining to the brick wall next the garden, behind which were the coach-houses and stables, with a conveyance into Charles Street through a large gate," and by Blome's map of the parish of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, the mansion is shown standing at right angles (looking east) to the Strand, with its gardens, stretching from the south side of the Piazza of Covent Garden to the Strand, and as far as Exeter House to the east.¹ But notwithstanding that it was, for the period, a relatively large house, and belonged to the noble family of Bedford from about the time of its erection in 1552, till so late as 1704, when they left it for the splendid mansion in Bloomsbury, when it was thereupon demolished, it appears to me to have not been on that scale of grandeur which characterised the other noble houses in the Strand I have mentioned, for which reason I shall leave it and pass on to the splendid town residence of the Percies at Charing Cross—which down to our own day was known as Northumberland House.

It is a curious fact, and one which gives food for much reflection, that NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE, of all the old private palaces of London, was the only one which survived till the latter half of the nineteenth century; most of them, as we have seen, were demolished in favour of building development; a few were replaced by mansions more sumptuous and more consonant with the times in which they were erected, but not one, except the London house of the Percies, remained intact till our own time.

In 1475, there had been erected, on the spot where Northumberland House was afterwards to stand, a cell with a chapel adjoining named St. Mary Rouncivall, from the convent of Roncesvalles in Navarre, with which it was connected; at about the time of the Reformation, however, this, in common with the other religious houses, was suppressed, and the land on which it stood let out in various tenements. Such at least is the

¹ Smith, in his *Antiquities of Westminster*, reproduces an enlargement of the ground plan of the property.



NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE, CHARING CROSS.

account of it given by Stow, but Pennant's version attributes the founding of the cell and chapel to the Earl of Pembroke in the reign of Henry III., and places the rebuilding of it, after it had been suppressed by Henry V., in that of Edward IV. In any case, the property appears to have passed by a grant of Edward VI. to Sir Thomas Cawarden, who had been knighted by Henry VIII. at the siege of Boulogne, in 1544, and was a gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber in 1546, besides holding the position of Master of the Revels during the reign of his successor; he died on August 22, 1559,¹ when the lands and tenements passed, probably by purchase, to Sir Robert Brett, from whom they were bought by Henry, first Earl of Northampton, of the Howard branch, second son of the poet Earl of Surrey.

Lord Northampton pulled down what buildings there were on the ground, and erected a stately palace² in their place. It is a little uncertain who was the architect, some supposing the Earl himself to have designed the house; others, following Walpole, attributing it to the joint work of Bernard Jansen and Gerard Christmas; while Moses Glover, who drew the Survey of Sion, and is described as a "painter and architect," may have had a hand in it. In any case it seems certain that, whether they drew out the designs or not, Jansen³ and Christmas were responsible for the actual building; the latter probably being chiefly concerned in the façade facing Charing Cross, as on that portion of the edifice was a C. Æ. sculptured in the stone, which Vertue conjectured to stand for the words *Christmas ædificavit*.⁴ The house was built of brick and stone, and was finished in 1605; it consisted of three sides of a square, the unbuilt portion facing the ample garden which stretched to the river. At the four corners were towers surmounted by turrets, as may be seen in contemporary views, while the Charing Cross front is familiar to most people, from Canaletti's picture and the many prints produced of it. The interior quadrangle was 81 feet square, and the front extended to no less than 162 feet.

Lord Northampton, during whose occupancy it had been called after his title, died, in June 1614, and bequeathed the mansion to his nephew, Thomas Howard, first Earl of Suffolk, of the Howard line, the second son of the fourth Duke of Norfolk. During Lord Suffolk's tenure of the house,

¹ See Machyn's *Diary* for an account of his funeral, &c.

² According to Francis Osborne, "it was built with Spanish gold"; which was the kind of accusation invariably brought against most prominent public men who erected sumptuous palaces.

³ Jansen was employed on the building of Audley End, Essex.

⁴ Walpole thinks it probable that a longer inscription containing Lord Northampton's titles in Latin, also graced the front, as Camden records that a young man was killed by the fall of the letter "S" from the front of Northampton House (as it was then called) on the occasion of the funeral of Anne of Denmark.

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his daughter, Lady Margaret Howard, was married to Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill, and it was to this circumstance that Suckling refers in his famous and delightful *Ballad on a Wedding*, the scene of which took place here, where, as the poet sings :

“ At Charing Cross, hard by the way
Where we (thou know'st) do sell our hay,
There is a house with stairs.”

Suckling, who, one supposes, was a guest at the function, describes the wedding as a countryman might be supposed to do ; whence the emphasis on the house having stairs, and the rustic turn of the language which curiously enough enshrines those exquisite conceits and perfect comparisons which make the poem a gem of its kind, unsurpassed and unsurpassable.

Lord Suffolk changed the name of the mansion to Suffolk House, although letters from him, in July and August 1614, are still dated from Northampton House, and completed the place by adding the front facing the river ;¹ but after occupying it for twelve years, he died, in 1626, and was succeeded by his son Theophilus, whose second daughter Elizabeth married in 1642, as his second wife, Algernon Percy, tenth Earl of Northumberland. The second Earl of Suffolk died four years later, and his successor, James, the third Earl, who, though married, had no children to succeed him, made over the property to his brother-in-law, when its name was for the third time changed, and it became known as Northumberland House till the close of its existence.

In view of the pedigree of the mansion here given, which is that accepted by all London topographers, it is a curious fact that in the City Archives is a letter from Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland, dated February 18, 1616, to the Lord Mayor, in which the Earl informs him that he has heard of a pretended claim made by the Court of Aldermen to a garden belonging to Northumberland House ; “ which he had sold to Mr. Robert Chamberlain,” and stating that “ he, and those from whom he claimed, had held and enjoyed Northumberland House, with the upper and nether garden, without interruption, for a hundred years, at least.” A note to this passage in the *Remembrancia*, states that “ Sion House, Charing Cross,” had been granted to the ninth Earl of Northum-

¹ In the *Calendar of State Papers*, for March 15, 1617, is a “ grant to the Earl of Suffolk to have a small pipe for conveying water to Suffolk House, inserted in the main pipe from Hyde Park to Westminster Palace ” ; while in the *Remembrancia*, is a letter from Lord Northumberland, dated March 7, 1664, stating that “ he had lately been deprived of the conduit water which had always served Northumberland House,” and requesting permission “ for a quill of water from the City’s pipes, which passed the gates of his residence.”

berland, by James I., in 1604. If this was the case it would appear that the Northumberland (or Sion) House here referred to, was an altogether different building from the better known one I am speaking of, and that all traces of this residence have been lost. It may conceivably have adjoined Suffolk or Northampton House, and the fact that Lord Northumberland had sold part of the property to Mr. Chamberlain, may have been an additional reason for Lord Suffolk's making the latter mansion over to him.

The tenth Earl of Northumberland was the heroic figure, who fought during the Civil Wars for King Charles, whom Clarendon speaks of "as in all his deportment a very great man," and whose handsome face and somewhat sad speculative eyes look out from Vandyck's famous picture. Among a variety of great offices which he filled, was, in 1642, that of First Commissioner of the Admiralty and the Cinque Ports, and the painter has introduced an allusion to this in the anchor on which the Earl rests his hand.¹

Two years after this a son (Josceline) was born to him, who succeeded to the title and estates on the death of his father, in 1668; he, however, died in Italy two years later, and with him the direct male line of the Percies came to an end; Northumberland House and the other properties of the family descending to his only daughter Elizabeth Percy, who had been married when a mere child of twelve to Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle, son of Henry, Duke of Newcastle. This boy, who had assumed the arms and name of Percy, died, however, in 1680, before he and his girl wife had lived together, and Lady Elizabeth was then married, in 1681, to Thomas Thynne of Longleat, the "Tom of Ten Thousand," and the Issachar of Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, who was murdered in the Haymarket, on February 12, 1682, by Count Koningsmarck who aspired to the hand of the heiress—a brutal deed of which the circumstances are too well known to require recapitulation here, and which is recorded on Thynne's monument in Westminster Abbey.

Lady Elizabeth had never lived with Thynne, and in the May following his murder, was wedded to Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset, so that, as has been pointed out, before the age of seventeen she was twice a virgin widow and three times a wife.

The Duke of Somerset, of whose imperious manner Swift has left a record, was known as the proud Duke,² and here at Northumberland

¹ Mr. Blomfield, in his *Renaissance Architecture in England*, reminds us that John Webb was doing work for the tenth Earl, at Northumberland House, in 1657-8.

² He appears to have met his match in at least two other members of the Seymour family—one a Baronet, and the other James Seymour, the painter, of whom Walpole tells a well-known anecdote. See *Anecdotes of Painting*.

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House he and his Duchess lived in something approaching regal state, until the death of the latter in 1722. The Duke, four years later, married Lady Charlotte Finch, daughter of the second Earl of Nottingham, and died in 1748; when he was succeeded in the occupancy of Northumberland House by his son, the seventh Duke, who was then no less than sixty-four years of age. The year after his accession he was created Earl of Northumberland, and having no male children, the remainder was made to Sir Hugh Smithson, who had married the Earl's only daughter, and who was, in 1766, raised to the Dukedom.

As we have seen, the garden front of Northumberland House had been added by the first Earl of Suffolk; it was, however, rebuilt in 1642, by the tenth Earl of Northumberland, from designs by Inigo Jones.¹ Evelyn, going to see some of the art treasures collected here, on June 9, 1658, thus speaks of them and incidentally refers to the new river front: "I went to see the Earl of Northumberland's pictures, whereof that of ye Venetian Senators (the Cornaro Family) was one of the best of Titian's, and another of Andrea del Sarto, viz., a Madonna, Christ, St. John, and an old woman; a St. Catherine of Da Vinci, with divers portraits of Van Dyke; a nativity of Georgione; the last of our blessed Kings and ye Duke of York, by Lely; a rosarie by ye famous Jesuits of Bruxelles, and severall more. This was in Suffolk House; ye new front towards ye gardens is tollerable, were it not drown'd by a too massie and clumsie pair of stayres of stone, without any neat invention."

The addition made to the house by the tenth Earl anticipated the various improvements it underwent at the hands of successive owners of the property. Thus the Duke of Somerset formed a gallery, to which Hugh Smithson, first Duke of that line, added, besides facing the quadrangle with stone; these latter improvements were carried out under the direction of Mylne, the architect, who also added the pavilion, in 1765; indeed so many alterations were made to the house, particularly about 1748 to 1752, that much of its original character was even then lost, and the fire which took place here in 1780, wholly destroyed the Charing Cross front; whereupon Daniel Garrett completed the work of restoration by rebuilding this portion of the palace.

According to a contemporary account, the fire "broke out about five in the morning, and raged till eight, in which time it burnt from the east end, where it began, to the west. Among the apartments consumed were those of Dr. Percy, Dean of Carlisle . . . the greatest part of whose valuable Library was, however, fortunately saved."

On the rebuilt façade which so many of us remember, the famous

¹ There is a view of this by Wale in Dodsley's *London*.

leadon lion designed by Carter,¹ which had stood, from 1752, on the earlier front, was replaced in its former position. In 1774 a further addition was made to the house by the erection of the ball-room, from the designs of Robert Adair, the interior of which resembled one of those magnificent apartments which are the glory of Italian palaces. Its walls were covered with large canvases, among which were Mengs' copies of Raphael's "School of Athens," "The Assembly of the Gods," and "The Marriage of Cupid and Psyche," in the Farnesina, and Caracci's "Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne"; its decorations were elaborate with massive carvings and gildings, and into its beautifully sculptured overmantle was let a portrait of the Duke. In the deep window recesses stood costly works of art, noticeable among them being the famous Sévres vase now at Sion.

Hardly less splendid was the drawing-room, with its gorgeously painted ceiling, its medallions being from the brush of Angelica Kauffmann, its immense mirrors, and the great crystal chandelier that helped to light up a thousand objects of beauty and artistic taste.

A writer in *Old and New London*, who probably had an opportunity of seeing the interior for himself, has left the following account of it: "The vestibule of the interior was 82 feet long, ornamented with Doric columns. Each end communicated with a staircase, leading to the principal apartments facing the garden and the Thames. They consisted of several spacious rooms fitted up in the most elegant manner, embellished with paintings, among which might be found the well-known 'Cornaro Family' by Titian . . . for which Algernon, Earl of Northumberland, is stated to have given Vandyck 1000 guineas, and a beautiful vase; 'St. Sebastian,' by Guercino; 'The Adoration of the Shepherds,' by Bassano, and others by well-known masters, &c. The grand staircase consisted of a single flight of thirteen moulded vein marble steps, and two flights of sixteen steps with a centre landing 22 feet by 6 feet, two circular plinths, and a handsome and richly gilt ormolu scroll balustrade, with moulded Spanish mahogany hand-rails."

Although this is rather like the description in a sale particular, it is not uninteresting, as giving some idea of what the interior of this great house was like, although the account hardly does justice to the magnificence of the staircase as it appears from contemporary sketches.²

Among other interesting objects that once graced the rooms was the

¹ Taylor, in his *Fine Arts*, says "Laurent Delvaux, who worked with Bird and Scheemaker, designed the Lion."

² Macky, in his *Journey through England*, published in 1714, says of Northumberland House: "It's a noble square court with a garden running down to the riverside; the Front to the Street is Princely, and the apartments answer his (the Duke's) grandeur."

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tapestry, designed by Zuccarelli, and worked in Soho Square, in 1758; the two cabinets of marbles and gems, once the property of Louis XIV., and the Sèvres vase, mentioned before and now at Sion, painted with a design of Diana and her nymphs disarming Cupid, and presented to the second Duke when he was Ambassador at Paris, by Charles X.

Apart from the great entertainments held at various times in this veritable palace—one of which, given in honour of Queen Charlotte's brother, in 1762, is described by Walpole as "a pompous festino," when "not only the whole house, but the garden, was illuminated, and was quite a fairy scene," and "arches and pyramids of light alternately surrounded the enclosure"—one or two events of more general interest have taken place here. Thus it was thither, in the spring of 1660, that, according to Clarendon, General Monk was invited, with the Earl of Manchester, Hollis, Sir William Waller, &c., by Earl Algernon,¹ and here in secret conference with them some of those measures were concerted which led to the speedy restoration of the monarchy. Here, Oliver Goldsmith once waited on the Duke, and mistook one of his gorgeously attired menials for the great man himself; here, on another occasion, through his friend Dr. Percy, he had an interview with his Grace, then just going as Lord-Lieutenant into Ireland, and who asking the poet what he could do for him, received the answer that he (Goldsmith) "had a brother there a clergyman that stood in need of help, but that for himself he required nothing"; much to the astonishment of Sir John Hawkins, who tells the story, and calls Goldsmith an idiot for thus trifling with his fortunes. And from here, on one occasion, in 1762, Horace Walpole set out with Lady Northumberland, the Duke of York, Lady Mary Coke, and Lord Hertford, all in one hackney-coach, "to hear the mysterious rappings of the Cock Lane ghost"; while at least two great funeral processions have started from this house: the first being that of the third Duke, who was buried at Westminster in February 1847, when the pageant reached from Northumberland House to the west door of the Abbey; and the other that of the fourth Duke (in February 1865), who was buried with similar pomp and circumstance.

Northumberland House, as a victim doomed to destruction, seems to have been regarded with envious eyes for many years. In 1845, when the Railway mania was at its height, a report was circulated that the stately pile was to be bought *en bloc* by the South-Western Railway; while in 1866, the Metropolitan Board of Works did endeavour to persuade the then Duke to sell, but without success. Six years later, however,

¹ The custody of the Royal children had been committed to him, whence their sojourn at Sion.

terms were come to; when the house and its grounds were sold for £500,000, and powers to form a street, &c., on its site obtained. In 1874 the transaction was completed, and the materials of the fabric were subsequently sold by auction;¹ the great staircase being given away for £360, and the rest of the building materials fetching something over £6000.

The contents—pictures, and furniture, and china—were dispersed between Alnwick, Sion, and the Duke's new house in Grosvenor Place; and thus "this great historical house, commenced by a Howard, continued by a Percy, and completed by a Seymour"—which had been the residence for two and a half centuries of some of the greatest families in the land, and which was, besides, the sole survivor of those Strand Palaces whose fortunes we have been following—was demolished to make way for the thoroughfare known as Northumberland Avenue leading to the Embankment. Apparently building speculation saw in this a splendid opportunity for making money, as the big hotels which have sprung up on its site have shown to be the case, otherwise the removal of some of the houses and shops on the west of Northumberland House, and the acquisition of a portion of its gardens would have probably proved equally suitable to whatever public requirements could demand. For this reason the destruction of this splendid palace was one of the most regrettable of those acts of vandalism which the benighted period of the early seventies witnessed.²

¹ Among them must have been the decorative work which Adam designed, such as the slab for the drawing-room fireplace, a drawing of which preserved in the Soane Museum is dated July 9, 1774, and the wonderful decorations of the drawing-room, the colour scheme of which was in red and green. In the Soane Museum is also a coloured drawing for a circular table-top designed by Adam, for the Duke.

² In Smith's *Antiquities of Westminster* is an illustration of the façade of Northumberland House, and there are other innumerable views of the great house extant.

CHAPTER III

BURLINGTON HOUSE AND OTHERS

IN this chapter I want to say something about five great houses which once proudly reared their heads in the West End, as we have seen so many do in the East and in that part of the town which once partook of something of the attributes of both—the Strand.

Of these palaces, two, Burlington House and Clarendon House, stood in Piccadilly, and the name of the former is perpetuated in the Burlington House of our own day; a third occupied the site of the present Buckingham Palace;¹ while two more were once the glory of Bloomsbury—Southampton or Bedford House, and Montagu House, where the British Museum, which stands on its exact site, now spreads its ample proportions.

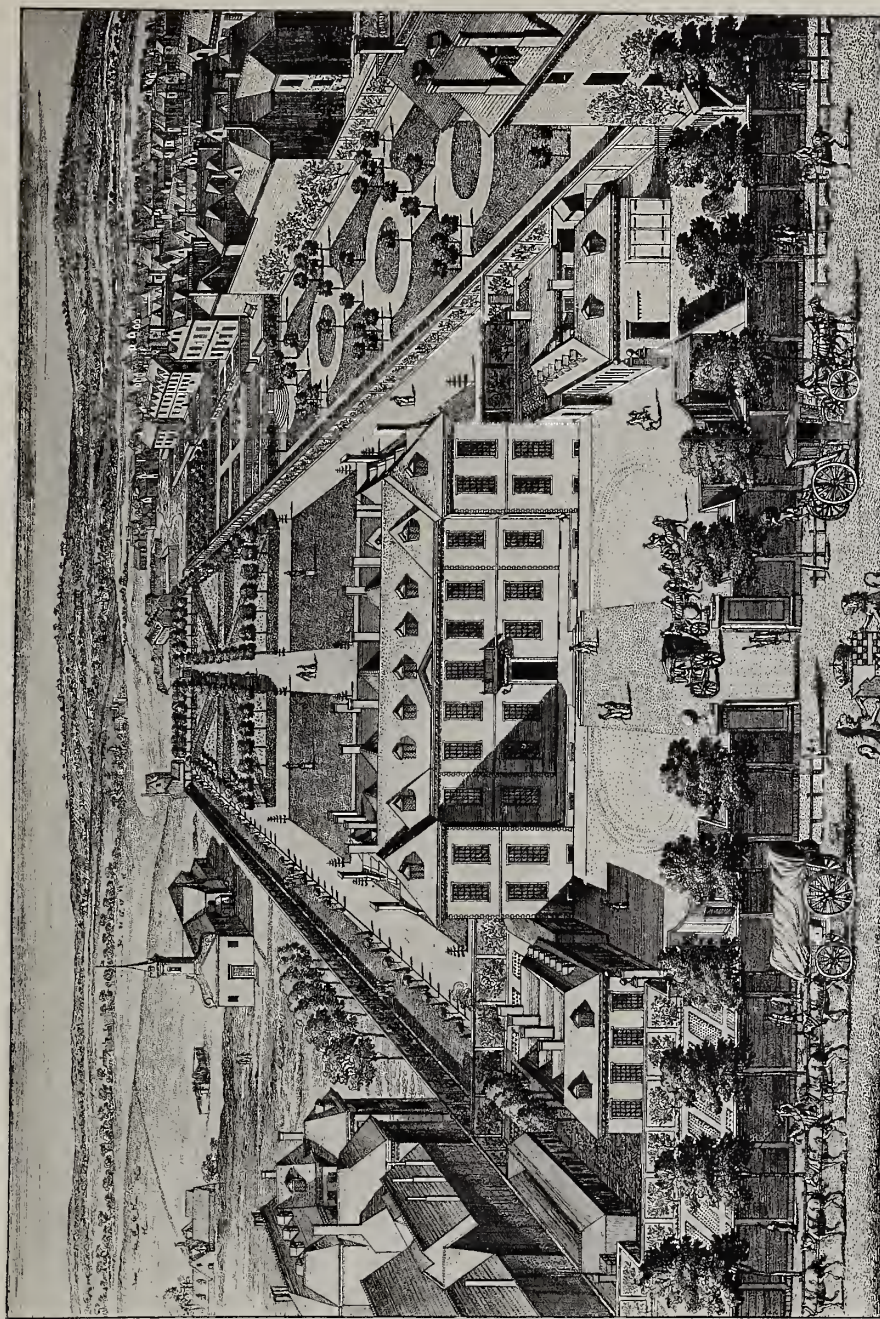
There are, I am aware, several others that might by a little extension of the word be included among the past private palaces of the West End; but I am unwilling to make this extension, because, in the first place, we shall have quite enough to do to examine those I have selected; and again because directly one begins to enlarge ones boundaries, as it were, it becomes proportionately difficult to discriminate between the relative merits of the many houses that would necessarily have some individual claims to be included.

BURLINGTON HOUSE

I will begin with Burlington House, which, like so many other great mansions, did not spring into existence in the completed form known to us by the later engravings of it which exist, but was the result of building evolution; in any case, however, the original structure was sufficiently imposing, as Kip's excellent view of it attests.

The ground on which it was erected was, at the period of the

¹ I do not forget that Kensington Palace was formerly a private possession, but when it belonged to the Finches it was but "a neat villa," according to Evelyn, and its chief interest is so largely connected with it as a Royal palace, that I do not include it for these reasons.



Burlington, N.Y., and Peckskill, belonging to the Rt. Hon.^{ble} Charles Boyle
 & Peckskill, & account Regalmanty & Duquenois, Earls of Cork in the City of
 County of the City of Cork, Lord High Treasurer of Ireland, Lord High Steward of
 the Baron Clifforde of Londonburgh, and Earls of Burlington, Baynes of Youghall
 of Ireland, Chief Governor of the County of Cork, and of the City, and
 the Academy of Newtowne in the County of Down, some of the Gentlemen of the S^{ty}.^{ty} Budebomien

BURLINGTON HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

Restoration, open country ; but a few years later three stately residences arose in this locality : Berkeley, Clarendon, and Burlington Houses.

There is some question as to who built and first occupied the original house, for although Lord Burlington was inhabiting it in 1668, there is reason to believe that he had been preceded in its occupancy by that Sir John Denham whose name is kept alive by his poem of "Cooper's Hill," and whose fame rests on the two famous lines on the Thames which are to be found in it. Pepys, writing on February 20, 1665, speaks of riding to see the building operations of Clarendon House, and mentions that Denham was beginning a house on its east side ; while, on September 28, 1668, he records visiting "my Lord Burlington's house, the first time I was ever there, it being the house built by Sir John Denham, next to Clarendon House."

Denham was, as we know, Surveyor to the King, and it is probable that he designed the house, with the help of John Webb, the pupil of Inigo Jones, not for himself but for Lord Burlington. Denham's share in its construction was, I expect, small enough, for Evelyn remarks on one occasion that he knew Sir John to be a better poet than architect, and it is likely that Webb was the ghost that provided the designs.

It has, indeed, been suggested that as about this time Denham was on the eve of his marriage with the lovely Margaret Brook, who soon after became the Duke of York's mistress and died mysteriously of poison the following year,¹ he prepared this house for her reception ; but in those days even poets filling public offices were hardly in a position to stand such an expense as must have been entailed by so magnificent a building as Burlington House, and I think it much more probable that Sir John was the nominal, John Webb the real, architect, and that the work was undertaken for Richard Boyle, who had been created Earl of Burlington in 1644.

Lord Burlington's fame has been somewhat eclipsed by that of his father, the great Earl of Cork, and of his brother, the famous Robert Boyle, but he filled a number of important offices, under Charles II., and had, in 1642, been made Commander of the Forces in Ireland ; while his Earldom was the reward of his share in bringing about the Restoration. He married, in 1635, Lady Elizabeth Clifford, only daughter and heiress of Henry, fifth Earl of Cumberland, and died in 1698, having occupied Burlington House for some thirty years as a town residence. According to Walpole, when asked why he had erected the house so far out of town, he replied that he was determined to have no building

¹ It was reported that Denham was responsible for her "taking off," and Anthony Hamilton specifically accuses him of the crime ; in any case Sir John himself died mad, in 1668.

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beyond him; he meant, on the north, for of course Berkeley House was on his west. The point of his remark is obvious enough, when we examine Kip's view of Burlington House taken about the beginning of the eighteenth century; for by it we see that its large gardens extend north to open fields, then known as Conduit Mead, whereas on its east are a number of houses, and the spot Lord Burlington chose was just to the west of these, which enabled him to enjoy an uninterrupted prospect to the north. Lord Burlington was succeeded by his grandson, Charles Boyle, who died young, only having enjoyed the title six years, when, in 1704, his son Richard, then not quite nine years old, succeeded him as third Earl. It is with this peer that the house is chiefly identified, and it is to him the mind turns when the title of Burlington occurs; for not only was he a man of singular taste and refinement, but he was also one who had he not been an Earl would have been known as a great architect. As it is, his fame as the latter is sufficiently established to enable him to take a high place among the amateur architects of this country.

One of the earliest of those who brought back from the Grand Tour something more than a mere confused remembrance of foreign towns and strange manners, Lord Burlington was possessed of a mind of singular receptivity, and the architectural beauties he had seen and carefully studied in Italy, fired him with the desire of emulating on the banks of the Thames what had excited his admiration on the banks of the Tiber. Nor had his travels resulted in awakening merely admiration; he set himself to learn the elements of the art which had fascinated him, and his house at Chiswick, General Wade's mansion in Cork Street, Lord Harrington's so-called villa at Petersham, and the splendid ball-room in Lord Cowper's house in St. James's Square, are a few of the results of his assiduous application and natural gifts.

Nor were his interests confined to this art: men of letters found in him as open-handed a patron as did architects and artists; and if he lodged Kent in Burlington House and patronised Colin Campbell, he was as generous and friendly to Pope and Gay, Arbuthnot and Swift.

Walpole in speaking of the architects of the reign of George II. thus mentions Lord Burlington: "Never was protection and great wealth more generously and more judiciously diffused than by this great person, who had every quality of a genius and artist, except envy. Though his own designs were more classic than Kent's,¹ he entertained him in his house till his death, and was more studious to extend his friend's fame than his own. Nor was his munificence confined to himself and

¹ "For Burlington unbiassed knows thy worth," writes Gay, addressing Kent.

his own houses and gardens. He spent immense sums in contributing to public works, and was known to choose that the expense should fall on himself rather than that his country should be deprived of some beautiful edifices. His enthusiasm for Inigo Jones was so active, that he repaired the church of Covent Garden because it was the production of that great master, and purchased a gateway¹ at Beaufort Garden in Chelsea, and transported the identical stones to Chiswick with religious attachment. With the same zeal for pure architecture he assisted Kent in publishing the designs for Whitehall, and gave a beautiful edition of the antique baths from the drawings of Palladio, whose papers he purchased with great cost."

It is *à propos* of this publication that Pope in his epistle "Of the Use of Riches," addressed to Lord Burlington, says :

"You show us Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use,"

while Gay was not behind his brother poet in hymning the praises of a patron whom they both could flatter with truth :

"While you, my Lord, bid stately piles ascend "

he apostrophises him in his "Epistle to the Earl of Burlington."

Such was the man who now set about to reconstruct the fine house which his great-grandfather had built. He associated with himself, in the work, Colin Campbell, a well-known architect of the day, who filled the post of Surveyor of the Works at Greenwich Hospital, and had designed Wanstead and Mereworth. The Earl's scheme did not include the demolition of the earlier house, which was of red brick, but its incasing with stone, and the conversion of the bedrooms of the first floor into State rooms, by the expedient of increasing their height ; the model he evidently took for the work being the Palazzo Porto at Vicenza which had been designed by Palladio.

It would have been difficult to allot the share which the Earl and his architect respectively had in this reconstruction had not the latter specifically indicated the portions for which he was alone responsible, in his *Vitruvius Britannicus* published in 1725, while Lord Burlington was yet living. By this we see that Campbell designed the general plan of the house, but not the stables, which he says "were built by another architect² before I had the honour of being called to his Lordship's

¹ That now in front of Devonshire House.

² Who this was is not clear, but Mr. Spiers in his interesting article on Burlington House in the *Architectural Review*, for October 1904, thinks it probable that it was Giacomo Leoni, who was brought to this country by Lord Burlington previous to 1715.

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service," and he adds, "the front of the house, the conjunction from thence to the offices, the great gate and street wall were all designed and executed by me."¹

Fault has been found with this wall, which, considering that it was merely a wall, could hardly have been more decorative, by Malcolm, and even he seems rather to have objected to it as hiding the mansion than from any intrinsic deficiencies in its design; but Ralph,² who is in general hypercritical about the architecture of London in his day, speaks of "the most expensive wall in England," as he calls it, in a flattering manner, and remarks that "nothing material can be objected to it, and much may be said in its praise. It is certain the height is wonderfully well proportioned to the length, and the decorations are both simple and magnificent."

But if there was any difference of opinion about this part of the scheme, there seems to have been a perfect *consensus* of praise bestowed on the beautiful colonnade which Walpole, on the grounds that Campbell lays no claim to its design, which he certainly might be thought to have done had he had anything to do with its invention, attributes to Lord Burlington himself. Chambers considers this "one of the finest pieces of architecture in Europe," which is perhaps rather hyperbolic, but there is no doubt that it formed one of the chief beauties of the new mansion, and it is a pity that it was ever removed. As Mr. Spiers says, it is not improbable that Bernini's famous colonnade in front of St. Peter's at Rome may have suggested the idea to Lord Burlington of forming the approach to his mansion on a similar but of course much smaller scale; and as to who was actually responsible for this fine piece of work, the same authority makes the suggestion that the original idea was due to Lord Burlington, who, however, not being a draughtsman himself, may have instructed Leoni to draw out plans and elevations which when complete were probably handed to Colin Campbell "to work out in harmony with the great gate which he had designed. Colin Campbell therefore probably set out the whole of the work and superintended its erection, but he refrained from claiming it as his own for the reasons just stated."³

As is the case when any new building arises, particularly if it be in advance of the times, much criticism was expended over the splendid

¹ In Campbell's publication are given illustrations of the façade, the gateway into Piccadilly, and the ground plan of the house.

² *Critical Survey of Public Buildings*, 1728, pp. 23-4.

³ Mr. Spiers's learned and valuable article, in which technical detail is set forth in a most interesting manner, is illustrated by a number of elevations, plans, and pictures of the interior of the mansion, including the great gate and the colonnade.

structure, and even the great name of Hogarth has to be included among its detractors, for, in 1724, he produced a plate called "The Taste of the Town," in which he pictorially attacked Lord Burlington and those who assisted him in the designs; Kent and Campbell being introduced, as well as Lord Burlington himself, into the drawing;¹ while an epigram supposed to have been written either by Lord Chesterfield or Lord Hervey runs:

"Possess'd of one great hall for state,
Without a room to sleep or eat;
How well you build let flattery tell,
And all the world how ill you dwell."²

But Lord Burlington had not much cause to be irritated at such mild censure, when so much praise was continually being poured forth over his work. Pope asks

"Who plants like Bathurst and who builds like Boyle?"

and Gay, in his "Trivia," has these lines, in which, after bemoaning the loss of the great houses in the Strand, he says:

"Yet Burlington's fair palace still remains;
Beauty within, without proportion reigns.
There oft I enter (but with cleaner shoes),
For Burlington's beloved by ev'ry Muse";

and in his "Epistle to Paul Methuen," he cries:

"While Burlington's proportion'd column rise,
Does not he stand the gaze of envious eyes?
Doors, windows, are condemned by passing fools,
Who know not that they damn Palladio's rules."

And, to give one more example, here is Walpole's criticism on the famous colonnade: "As we have few samples of architecture more antique and imposing than that colonnade, I cannot help mentioning the effect it had on myself. I had not only never seen it, but had never heard of it, at least with any attention, when soon after my return from Italy, I was invited to a ball at Burlington House. As I passed under the gate

¹ It was afterwards called "Masquerades and Operas, Burlington Gate," and is known as "the small masquerade ticket." Mr. Wheatley draws attention to the prophetic labelling of the front gate, "Academy of Arts."

² It was certainly Hervey who said of Lord Burlington's house at Chiswick that "it was too small to live in, and too large to hang to one's watch-chain."

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by night, it could not strike me. At daybreak looking out of the window to see the sun rise, I was surprised with the vision of the colonnade that fronted me. It seemed one of those edifices in fairy tales that are raised by genii in a night's time."¹

There is no doubt that whoever wrote the epigram I have before quoted, had some reason for suggesting that everything had been sacrificed to the reception-rooms, for the upper chambers and those on the ground floor were small and not very convenient, but this was so characteristic of the period that one wonders so much was made of it; certainly Lord Chesterfield did better when he built his fine house, which may be a reason for attributing the lines, quoted above, to him; but the reception-rooms were as splendid in proportion as they were magnificent in decoration; the richness of the gilding was enhanced by the deep tones of the solid mahogany doors and the graceful modelling of the marble chimneypieces. The ceilings and even some of the walls were beautified by the paintings of Marco Ricci and Sebastian Ricci, the former being responsible for the architectural portions and the backgrounds, and the latter introducing the figures, as well as by the work of Sir James Thornhill, who if he, as is affirmed, really prompted Hogarth to produce his depreciation of the exterior of the house, made a shabby return for the Earl's patronage.

During Lord Burlington's life, the great mansion in Piccadilly seems to have been a sort of open house for the genius and talent of the time.² Pope and Gay, as we have seen, were perpetual visitors, so was the redoubtable Dean of St. Patrick's, and a not very pleasant, but I am bound to say highly characteristic, story is told of one of his visits here when he first met the Countess.³ Here it is, as given on the authority of Mrs. Pilkington in her *Memoirs*. "Being in London, Swift went to dine with the newly married Earl of Burlington, who neither introduced his wife nor mentioned her name, willing, it is supposed, to have some diversion. After dinner the Dean said, 'Lady Burlington, I hear you can sing: sing me a song.' The lady thought this very unceremonious and refused, when Swift said she should sing or he would make her. 'Why, madam, I suppose you take me for one of your poor hedge parsons; sing when I bid you.' The Earl laughed at this freedom, but the lady was so vexed that she burst into tears and retired. Swift's

¹ *Anecdotes of Painting*.

² Among the pictures formerly hanging here, Walpole mentions a portrait of Rousseau the painter by Le Fevre, as well as a prospect of London before the Fire showing the great houses in the Strand, by Thomas Van Wyck, and a view of the parade in St. James's Park, with Charles and his courtiers and women in masks walking.

³ She was Lady Dorothy Saville, daughter and heiress of William, Marquis of Halifax, and had married Lord Burlington in 1721.

first words on seeing her again were, 'Pray, madam, are you as proud and ill-natured now as when I saw you last?' To which she answered with great good-humour, 'No, Mr. Dean, I will sing to you, if you please.' From this time Swift conceived a great esteem for the lady." One's power of criticism is paralysed at such conduct, and one hardly knows which to wonder at most, the Earl's indifferent attitude or the extraordinarily forgiving spirit of his Countess. Swift's brutality is too well known to excite particular comment.

It is pleasant to think that not many such characters had the run of Burlington House. The great Handel was an honoured guest, and occupied apartments here from 1715 till 1718, during which time he composed his operas of *Amadis*, *Theseus*, and *Pastor Fido*, and here he frequently met Dr. Arbuthnot who, himself, had studied music as well as most other things.

Later, Faustina, the singer, during the time of her great feud with Cuzzoni, must frequently have been here, for Lady Burlington was the chief of her partisans, as Lady Pembroke was of those of her rival; and, in 1744, when the celebrated dancer Violette, who became afterwards Mrs. Garrick, came to this country, she was included among the Earl's "family," and resided, at, I hasten to say, the Countess's invitation, in Burlington House; Kent, who was also an inmate of the mansion, designed the tickets for Violette's benefit; and on her marriage with the great actor, Lady Burlington gave her a splendid dowry.

Lord Burlington died in 1753,¹ without an heir, and the property then passed to Lord Hartington, who became fourth Duke of Devonshire, and who had married, in 1748, Lady Charlotte Boyle, Lord Burlington's daughter.

A later resident here was the third Duke of Portland, who had married Lady Dorothy Cavendish, daughter of the above-mentioned Duke of Devonshire, and when the Duke of Portland became First Lord of the Treasury, in 1783, under the auspices of Charles James Fox, Burlington House was the chief meeting-place of the party, as Devonshire House became later. In 1807, during the Duke's second administration, after the fusion of the Whigs with Pitt, it occupied a like position, except that Tories reigned where Whigs had reigned before.

The Duke of Portland died in 1809, and six years later, the sixth Duke of Devonshire sold Burlington House to his uncle Lord Henry Cavendish, created Earl of Burlington in 1831,² for £75,000.

¹ He is supposed to have spent such immense sums on his buildings, and patronage of the fine arts generally that, in 1738, he is recorded to have sold an income of £9000 for £200,000, "which won't pay his debts," says Barber, writing to Swift.

² His grandson, who succeeded him in 1834, became seventh Duke of Devonshire in 1858.

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On taking possession its new owner made a variety of alterations, although not so many nor such drastic ones as had been anticipated, and he employed Ware the Architect to carry out the improvements. Among other things which Ware effected was the building of the well-known Burlington Arcade, which was completed in 1819. A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* waxed mighty humorous over the innovation effected by this Arcade; but there is no doubt it was the source of an excellent income to the Cavendishes while they possessed it, which was till the year 1854, when the sixth Duke of Devonshire sold Burlington House to the Government for £140,000. With this its interest as a private palace ceases, but it will be interesting to rapidly glance at its later history.

At first, indeed, there appears to have been no particular reason for the purchase of the place except the very reasonable price at which it was possible to acquire it, for we find it lent to the University of London for a time, and later, in 1857, rooms in it were offered to various learned societies of which the Royal Society alone took advantage, although afterwards others joined them here, when the University of London, which still occupies a portion, was moved to the east wing. Many schemes were formulated both in Parliament and by "the man in the street," as to the best mode of disposing of the house and grounds. Some were for pulling down the former; others for adding to it: but there seems to have been a general desire to do away with the wall facing Piccadilly. The public never has liked walls; and indeed however picturesque they may be in the country, where many of those red-brick barriers are things of beauty in themselves, there is not much to be said for them in London except that they give an air of pleasant mystery where no real mystery exists. But this wall was, as we have seen, an exceptional one, yet those who advocated its preservation seem chiefly to have done so on the ground that were it demolished the stables and outbuildings of Burlington House would be exposed. In 1859, however, the Government brought forward the suggestion that the Royal Academy should leave that portion of the National Gallery which it had hitherto occupied and be housed here, and plans were prepared showing the various alterations which would be necessary to make Burlington House a fitting home for it; the Piccadilly front being designed by Barry, who was working in collaboration with Banks on the rest of the scheme. A change of Government put the matter back for several years, but in 1866, the scheme was again brought forward with various modifications, by which the place was divided up between the University of London, destined to occupy the new buildings facing Burlington Gardens; the Royal Academy to have the

main building for which Smirke designed the picture galleries, &c., and various learned societies to be accommodated in the wings which joined the latter to the Piccadilly façade. The wall facing Burlington Gardens was demolished in 1866; that fronting Piccadilly was taken down two years later when was also destroyed the famous colonnade over which Walpole had waxed eloquent.

Should some of the ghosts of Piccadilly really revisit the glimpses of the moon, as a contemporary writer suggests,¹ then they would hardly know the place, so changed has become its outward form, so overbuilt its ample gardens. Swift and Pope, and Arbuthnot and Gay, Walpole and the careless throng which once danced in those rooms or wondered at that colonnade; those volunteers who wheeled and manœuvred in that ample courtyard when the eagle of France threw the menace of his shadow over London itself; those who crowded to the famous ball given here by White's Club to the allied sovereigns in 1814, when the wings of the eagle had been, as it turned out, but inadequately clipped; even those quiet eyes of the statues among the marvellous Elgin marbles, which, in 1815, were temporarily placed here, must all wonder at a change which has resulted in showing how transitory is the glory of that which might permissibly have been supposed to be permanent.

CLARENDON HOUSE

When Sir Robert Walpole once pointed out the folly committed by a great minister of the Crown in erecting a palace during his term of office, he no doubt had in mind the fate of Lord Clarendon and his stately mansion² in Piccadilly, and, having satisfied himself of the inexpediency of such an act, he straightway proceeded to the building of Houghton Hall! Which proves, if proof were required, that the most far-seeing and judicial can lay down excellent rules of conduct, and, on occasion, forget their application. But if a moral is required for the *cacæthes ædificandi* which has affected so many great men from Pliny downwards, it surely is to be found in the history of Clarendon House, which rose in splendour, was occupied in sorrow and misgiving, and became a thing of the past, within the short space of a single decade.

Lord Clarendon, who reproaches himself for that passion for building to which "he was naturally too much inclined," lived to see the grave

¹ In some lines in *The Builder* quoted by Mr. Wheatley, and also, as if a title never could be original, by Mr. Street in his recently published book.

² There is a good view of Clarendon House in Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata*, as well as many others, one of which is here reproduced.

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mistake he had made in raising this stately pile, and he acknowledged that "his weakness and vanity more contributed to that gust of envy that had so violently shaken him, than any misdemeanours that he was thought to have been guilty of."

A royal grant of land at this spot, and the opportunity of purchasing a quantity of stone that had been destined for the repair of old St. Paul's, went hand in hand with his natural inclinations, and could hardly be regarded, as he suggests, as the cause of his building the palace. Clarendon was in many respects a great man, but he was also an inordinately ambitious one, and just as he delighted in being able to call a royal duke son-in-law, so he was happy in the thought that his London residence would eclipse those of families in comparison with which his own was of mushroom growth; and then he possibly felt himself so secure in power and the favour of his sovereign that he was indifferent to public opinion and fearlessly gave into the hands of his enemies the petard which was to hoist him: certain it is that that was the rock on which he split, and the populace who saw in it the result of political tergiversation, were, as they generally are, the more ready to accuse him because of his arrogance and ostentation, and when they called the place Dunkirk House or Tangier Hall or Holland House,¹ although they indirectly attacked his supposed unpatriotic policy, they chiefly aimed their shafts at his vainglorious parade.

Had historical truths had power to warn him, Clarendon might have remembered Wolsey's fate and Buckingham's career, but one seldom feels so secure as when contemplating the adverse fortune of others, and *immemor sepulcri*, he ruined himself in building a home in which he experienced little but sorrow and shame.

The date of the letters-patent by which Charles II. granted to Clarendon the site on which Clarendon House was to rise, is June 13, 1664, and on that very day, by a curious coincidence when we remember one of the names afterwards applied to the mansion, Mr. Coventry suggested to Pepys that he should write the History of the late Dutch War.

The tract of land thus obtained by Clarendon was a very large one; indeed it seems to have extended from Swallow Street to a point down Piccadilly west of St. James's Street, probably where Berkeley Street now stands.² In any case, Lord Clarendon selected the spot immediately facing St. James's Street for the erection of his house, and building opera-

¹ Because, says Burnet, he was believed to have received money from the Dutch in order to heighten his opposition to the war.

² The grant is given in Lister's *Life of Clarendon*.

tions began soon after he had obtained the grant; no less than three hundred men being employed on it.

Rugge, in his *Diurnal*, for August 1664, mentions that eight acres had then been enclosed for the house and grounds, and in the pages of Pepys and Evelyn, we can follow the gradual building of the mansion. Thus on October 15, 1664, Evelyn accompanies Lord and Lady Clarendon to see the progress of the work; in the February of the following year, Pepys rides west to make himself acquainted with the new palace about which every one was talking—and not talking respectfully; and he pays another visit to it, on January 31, 1666, because he had heard so much about it from Evelyn; “and indeed,” he adds, “it is the finest pile I ever did see in my life, and will be a glorious house.” So impressed was Samuel with the place that we find him a fortnight later taking Mr. Hill to see it, when the two friends managed, with some difficulty, to get on to the roof, whence was obtained “the noblest prospect I ever saw in my life, Greenwich being nothing to it,” says the diarist.

Pepys was notoriously hyperbolic in his appreciation of what pleased him, but there is no doubt that, as we can see for ourselves from the extant prints of it, the place must have been magnificent, and even the sober Evelyn, who had seen the palaces of France and Italy, was in a rapture of admiration, and in a letter to Lord Cornbury (Clarendon's son) thus speaks of the house: “If it be not a solecism to give a palace so vulgar a name, I have never seen a nobler pile. It is without hyperbole the best contrived, the most useful, graceful, and magnificent house in England. Here is taste and use, solidity and beauty, most symmetrically combined together: seriously there is nothing abroad pleases me better: nothing at home approaches it.” But this eulogy at the gallop was, it must be remembered, addressed to the son of the builder, and in an entry in his *Diary* for November 28, 1666, Evelyn's enthusiasm was so much sobered down that although he still confesses that “it was a goodly pile to see,” and “placed most gracefully,” yet he has become critical and can write that there were “many defects as to ye architecture.”

The architect of the house was Pratt, of whom less is known than we might expect, seeing that he was responsible for so fine a building. Evelyn had known him in Rome; and we find him as one of the Commissioners for the repair of old St. Paul's Cathedral, deliberating thereon with Wren, May, and others, including Evelyn himself, on August 27, 1666, when in various matters his judgment differed from that of the diarist and Wren. Pratt was also the architect of Lord Allington's house at Horseheath, a building which, according to Lysons, cost no

less than £70,000; but Walpole does not mention him, nor is his name to be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

The cost of the house far exceeded the architect's estimate of £20,000, and Lord Orrery had reason for his remark made in a letter to Lord Clarendon, in which he assumes that not the former sum named by the Chancellor, but the £40,000 estimated by himself was nearer the actual figure.

But even this sum must have represented but a portion of the outlay, for large as it is, and larger still as it was in those days, it would hardly in itself seem sufficient to justify Lord Clarendon in saying that he had ruined himself by its expenditure; but when we remember the splendid way in which the house was furnished; the number of fine pictures (about which I shall have something to say presently) that adorned its walls; and the large household that must have been necessary, it is not difficult to see how even Clarendon's great resources must have been drained.

Popular clamour hardly waited for the paint to dry in Clarendon House, before it began to vent itself on the place and its possessor; all the tribe of petty verse-makers and pamphleteers metaphorically hastened to besmear the walls with their venom; and even the common people were enraged to see so much money expended at a time when the Plague and the Great Fire, as well as the effects of a disastrous war, and the extravagance of a frivolous court which they had always with them, were making sad inroads on their own purses. Like all such clamourers against personal ostentation and expenditure, they forgot that the money thus lavished at least passed into general circulation, and that employment was thus found for many who would have otherwise been idle.

Such considerations could, indeed, hardly be expected to have weight with men in the seventeenth century, when we find so much of the same stupid ignorance of facts in those of the twentieth, and the result was that, in the public prints, nay painted on the very gates of Clarendon House, were bitter invectives, and attacks which lost much of their point by being based on ignorant supposition. They are hardly worth quoting, as they all, more or less, harp on the same string; the building of the house and the ill-gotten gains with which it was presumed that Lord Clarendon paid for it. Even Andrew Marvell, who should have known better, was represented among more insignificant assailants of the Lord Chancellor, and his "Clarendon House-Warming" is little better than the others so far as poetical merit goes, and none at all in sentiment.

Pepys mentions the actual violence done to the house itself, in a passage in his *Diary*, dated June 14, 1667. "Mr. Hater tells me," he writes, "that some rude people have been, as he hears, at my Lord

Clarendon's, where they have cut down the trees before his house, and broke his windows ; and a gibbet either set up before or painted upon his gate, and these three words writ : ' Three sights to be seen : Dunkirke, Tangier, and a barren Queene.' "

Nothing, perhaps, more plainly shows that Clarendon was made the scapegoat for every ill that befell the nation, than the last implication, since he opposed the marriage of Charles with Catherine for the very reason for which he was supposed to have urged it on. One wonders that the Plague and the Great Fire were not also laid to his charge !

But Lord Clarendon enjoyed, if he ever really did enjoy, the fruits of his expenditure but a short time ; such popular anger could hardly be mistaken, and the action of Parliament soon showed that the fury of his enemies was not confined to those in the street. In 1667, he was impeached, and on November 29th he fled the country, sending his carriage and servants to York House, Twickenham, to put his enemies off the scent. With the help of Charles, whose family had always found him a devoted friend, he might conceivably have weathered the storm ; but he had a stronger enemy even than the Parliament or the people, in the person of the notorious Lady Castlemaine, and Charles but followed the traditional policy of his family in sacrificing to insistence those without whom their power would have been a negligible quantity ; and so, like Wolsey, Clarendon fell primarily through the influence of a woman. Evelyn has a pathetic entry in his *Diary*, in which he relates how he went " to visit the late Lord Chancellor," a few hours before his flight. " I found him," he says, " in his garden, at his new built palace, sitting in his gowt wheelchayre, and seeing the gates setting up towards the north and the fields. He looked and spake very disconsolately. After some while deploring his condition to me, I took my leave. Next morning I heard he was gone."

The head and front of his offending being removed, his son, Lord Cornbury, seems to have been left in peaceful possession of the great house in Piccadilly, and here Evelyn visited him, on December 20, 1668 ; and thus speaks of the circumstance : " I din'd with my Lord Cornbury at Clarendon House, now bravely furnished, especially with the pictures of most of our ancient and modern witts, poets, philosophers, famous and learned Englishmen ; which collection of the Chancellor's I much commended, and gave his Lordship a catalogue of more to be added."

Of these pictures we are luckily able also, with the aid of Evelyn, to obtain some idea, from a letter he wrote to Pepys, probably after the visit just recorded. Although the list supplied is obviously not exhaustive,

it no doubt contains the most important of those pictorial decorations for which Clarendon House was famed, and which largely consisted of, as Macaulay says, "the masterpieces of Vandyck which had once been the property of ruined Cavaliers," housed in the "palace which reared its long and stately front right opposite to the humbler residence of our Kings."

Here is the list as given by Evelyn: "There were at full length, the greate Duke of Buckingham, the brave Sir Horace and Francis Vere, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Philip Sidney, the greate Earl of Leicester, Treasurer Buckhurst, Burleigh, Walsingham, Cecil, Lord Chancellor Bacon, Ellesmere, and I think all the late Chancellors and grave Judges in the reignes of Queen Elizabeth and her successors, James and Charles I. For there was Treasurer Weston, Cottington, Duke Hamilton, the magnificent Earle of Carlisle, Earles of Carnarvon, Bristol, Holland, Lindsey, Northumberland, Kingston, and Southampton; Lords Falkland and Digby (I name them promiscuously as they come into my memorie), and of Charles the second, besides the Royal Family, the Dukes of Albemarle and Newcastle; Earles of Darby, Shrewsbury, St. Albans, the brave Montrose, Sandwich, Manchester, &c.; and of the Coife, Sir Edward Coke, Judge Berkeley, Bramston, Sir Orlando Bridgman, Jeofry Palmer, Selden, Vaughan, Sir Robert Cotton, Dugdale, Mr. Camden, Mr. Hales of Eton. The Archbishops Abbot and Laud, Bishops Juxon, Sheldon, Morley, and Duppa; Dr. Sanderson, Brownrig, Dr. Donne, Chillingworth, and severall of the Cleargie, and others of the former and present age. For there were the pictures of Fisher, Fox, Sir Thomas More, Tho. Lord Cromwell, Dr. Nowel, &c. And what was most agreeable to his Lordship's humour, Old Chaucer, Shakespere, Beaumont and Fletcher, who were both in one piece, Spenser, Mr. Waller, Cowley, Hudibras, which last he plac'd in the roome where he us'd to eate and dine in public."

What a gallery! There is hardly a notable name in three reigns absent from the collection; but for the great Chancellor the assemblage must have awakened sad memories often enough; and some of those heads must surely have given him food for reflection; how many of them had not fallen on the scaffold; how many of them had not sacrificed everything for the cause of which he was the strenuous partisan; how many had not experienced what little faith there was to be placed in princes! One wonders if the destiny of some of these did not sometimes awaken fear and apprehension in his mind; when he gazed on the features of the "greate Duke of Buckingham," and Lord Chancellor Bacon, did no premonition of his own fate force itself upon him; did

he believe that "vaulting ambition" in his case would not o'erleap itself? Surely the sad eyes of the King he served so faithfully, and those of the Strafford he had known so well, must have told him something! When he sat in his "gowt wheelchayre," and heard the rabble clamouring at his gates and tearing down the trees, the fate of Laud and Montrose, and Falkland's bitter death should have warned him. No wonder from such a sad assemblage his "general humour" was to turn to the contemplation of old Dan Chaucer, and Shakespere's mighty brow; the courtly Spenser and the gentle Cowley; no wonder he selected the humorous features of Butler to smile upon him while he dined, and perhaps snatched a respite from the troubles that compassed him round, by the thought of that book which Pepys tried so hard to like, and which was as potent as the sword of cavaliers to bring a King into his own again.

How many of these "full lengths" must now be hanging in the great houses we shall presently be examining, it is impossible to say. Perhaps that of Ellesmere is identical with the portrait which now hangs in Bridgewater House; did those wonderful presentments of the Duke of Hamilton and the Earl of Holland which are to-day in the dining-room of Montagu House, originally hang on my Lord Chancellor's walls? Such speculation is, of course, idle, but we know that some of the representatives of those cavaliers whose portraits found their way to Clarendon House made attempts to obtain at least replicas of their former possessions, and there is on record that "Earl Paulett was an humble petitioner to the son of the Chancellor for leave to take a copy of his grandfather's and grandmother's pictures that had been plundered from Hinton St. George; which was obtained with great difficulty, because it was thought that copies might lessen the value of the originals."

Lord Cornbury appears to have let Clarendon House to the Duke of Ormonde, soon after his father's flight; at any rate the Duke was living here when Colonel Blood made his daring attempt to kidnap him on the night of December 6, 1670, as he was proceeding up St. James's Street after having attended the Prince of Orange, then on a visit to this country, to the City. Blood and his myrmidons had actually succeeded in getting possession of the Duke's person and conveying him some way past Berkeley House towards Knightsbridge, when the latter by a desperate effort unhorsed the man who was guarding him, and struggled with him on the ground until rescued by his porter and others.

On Lord Clarendon's death, in 1674, the mansion¹ was sold, in the

¹ William Skillman engraved a view of the façade of Albemarle House, as it was afterwards called.

following year, to the second Duke of Albemarle, the son of the great Monk, for £26,000, which sum, knowing as we do what the place cost, seems a very reasonable one. In the *Calendar of State Papers*, for November 1675, is a petition of the Duke of Albemarle's to the King, under these circumstances: The Duke points out that when the original grant was made to Clarendon on August 23, 1664, the property was described as being in the parish of St. James's in the Fields, whereas it was properly in that of St. Martin's in the Fields, and he desires that, as he has since purchased it, the original grant may be confirmed in accurate terms, so as to substantiate his title; which, by another entry, we find acceded to.

But the Duke was an extravagant man, besides being notoriously intemperate—"burnt to a coal with hot liquor," is the comment of a contemporary—and his monetary difficulties becoming acute, he was, perforce, obliged to part with the place, then known as Albemarle House, to Sir Thomas Bond and others for, it is said,¹ the still further reduced sum of £20,000; although, as we shall see, the price has been placed at a much higher figure by Evelyn.

Bond and his syndicate bought the house for the specific purpose of pulling it down and developing the estate, and Bond Street and Albemarle Street perpetuate the names of its owners.²

Evelyn, writing on September 18, 1683, thus records the final incarnation of the house where the great Clarendon and the scarcely less celebrated Ormonde had for a short time dwelt.

"After dinner," he writes, "I walked to survey the sad demolition of Clarendon House, that costly and only sumptuous palace of the late Lord Chancellor Hyde, where I have often been so cheerful with him, and sometimes so sad. . . . This stately palace is decreed to ruin to support the prodigious waste the Duke of Albemarle had made of his estate. He sold it to the highest bidder, and it fell to certain rich bankers and mechanics, who gave for it and the ground³ about £35,000; they designe a new towne, as it were, and a most magnificent piazza. 'Tis said they have already materials towards it with what they sold of the house alone, more worth than what they paid for it. See the vicissitude of earthly things! I was astonished at this demolition, nor less at the little army of labourers and artificers levelling the ground, laying foundations, at an expense of £200,000, if they perfect their designe."⁴

¹ In the *Loyal Protestant and True Domestick Intelligencer*.

² It is said that the materials of the mansion fetched more than was paid for the property.

³ Said to have extended to twenty-four acres in 1688.

⁴ Archer, in his *Vestiges of Old London*, 1851, says that the pillars flanking the entrance of the Three Kings Livery Stables, in Piccadilly, were, at the time he published his work, the sole existing remains of the once stately Clarendon House.

BUCKINGHAM HOUSE

When James I., in 1609, attempted to create an industry by the importation of silkworms into this country, the spot chosen for the planting of the necessary mulberry trees was part of that on which the present Buckingham Palace, with its forty acres of gardens, stands. The keeping of these gardens was, with the occupancy of the house, granted by Charles I. to Lord Aston, in 1629, but a year or two later, certainly before 1632, Lord Goring purchased the property for £800, and thereupon called the residence Goring House.¹ It is not exactly clear when the cultivation of silkworms and the trees that fed them was given up as a hopeless endeavour, but in any case it is obvious that Goring House and a certain portion of the grounds were divided from the remainder of the property which continued to be called The Mulberry Gardens, and was for many years a place of public amusement, much affected by the fashion of the day and continually receiving mention in the plays and diaries of the period; Pepys and Evelyn referring to it on various occasions, and Etherege and Sedley and Wycherley all introducing it into their dramatic works; one of the plays of Sedley having for its title that of *The Mulberry Garden*.

When this division took place other portions of the ground were also separated, and by Faithorne and Newcourt's plan of 1658, we can see that there were three residences here at that time; the smallest, with which we are not concerned, standing at about the south-east corner of Constitution Hill; the second, Goring House, where the palace is now situated; and the third, and largest, known as Tart Hall, immediately on its south side.

Before proceeding to say anything of Goring House, I must give a few facts about Tart Hall. This fine house was built, in 1638, for the Countess of Arundel, wife of the marble-collecting Earl of pious memory, by Nicholas Stone, the elder.² From Lady Arundel, the place passed to her second son, Lord Stafford, who was beheaded, in 1680, on the lying evidence of Titus Oates. It later became a place of entertainment, probably in conjunction with the Mulberry Gardens, and was demolished in 1720, after its contents, including many of the famous Arundel marbles, and some of the pictures collected by the Earl, among which was the famous "Diana and Actæon" by Titian now belonging to Lord Ellesmere, had been sold by auction.

¹ There is a plan of the Goring estate, showing Goring House facing south, and dated 1675, in the Grace collection.

² Walpole mentions his receiving at various times £600 odd to pay his workmen in this matter.

Return we to Goring House which during the Commonwealth was tenanted for a time by Speaker Lenthall. After the Restoration, Lord Goring returned and took up his residence here, having expended some £20,000 on the place, and on July 10, 1660, Pepys, who had that day put on for the first time a silk suit, went with his wife to the wedding of Nan Hartlib and Mynheer Roder "which was kept at Goring House, with very great state, cost, and noble company," according to the diarist. Lord Goring, however, only enjoyed his second term of ownership for two years, when, on his death, his son sold the mansion to Henry Bennet, created Earl of Arlington, in 1665, and known to fame as one of Charles II.'s secretaries of state, and the "A" of the notorious Cabal. At this time, it was but an "ill built" house, according to Evelyn, who however saw in it the possibilities of a "pretty villa."

Lord Arlington seems to have done much to make it a fine place; for if he did not actually rebuild it he so greatly enlarged it, that it might properly, even then, have been considered as palatial. Its name was at the same time changed from Goring to Arlington House.¹ Soon after the death of the second Lord Goring, which occurred on March 3, 1670, Charles granted, in 1673, the grounds to Lord Arlington; these grounds being the Mulberry Gardens, as separate from the house and gardens directly attached to them.

But, in the following year, the mansion was totally destroyed by fire, the whole of its contents being consumed. Whether this disaster was the immediate cause, or whether it was due to the demise of the whole property to Lord Arlington, it is certain that the Mulberry Gardens were closed about this time, and henceforth may be regarded as private property. Evelyn refers to the destruction of the house, in an entry in his *Diary*, for September 21, 1674, thus: "I went to see the great loss that Lord Arlington had sustained by fire at Goring House, this night consumed to the ground, with exceeding loss of hangings, plate, rare pictures, and cabinets; hardly anything was saved of the best and most princely furniture that any subject had in England. My Lord and Lady were both absent at Bath."

Soon after the disaster Lord Arlington set about rebuilding the house, and a poem in Latin written by Dryden's son, Charles, perpetuates its beauty and advantages. On Arlington's death, in 1685, the house passed to his only child Isabella, who had been married when little more than an infant, to the Duke of Grafton, a son of Charles II. and Lady Castle-

¹ The following entry occurs in Evelyn's diary, under date of April 17, 1673: "She (the Countess of Arlington) carried us up into her new dressing-roome at Goring House, where was a bed, two glasses, silver jars and vases, cabinets and other rich furniture as I had seldom scene."

maine. The Duchess of Grafton let it, in 1698, to the first Duke of Devonshire, and later, in 1702, sold the property, for £13,000, to John Sheffield, created in the following year, Duke of Buckinghamshire, the

“Sharp-judging Adriel, the muse’s friend,
Himself a muse in Sanhedrin’s debate”

of Dryden’s *Absalom and Achitophel*.

Although Arlington House must have been a fine one,¹ it was not fine enough to satisfy the taste of its new owner, and in the year in which he was raised to the dukedom, he commissioned Colin Campbell to design a new palace; at least so some authorities say; others affirming that the architect was that Captain Wynne, or Winde, who was responsible for Newcastle House in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, and Coombe Abbey. Walpole, in referring to Campbell and Winde, makes no mention of either having had a hand in Buckingham House, but Walpole was so frequently inadequate that perhaps this goes for little. On the whole, the evidence is in favour of Winde, and I am glad it is so, for it enables me to introduce the following anecdote.

When the mansion was nearly completed, Winde had a good deal of difficulty in obtaining payment of arrears owed by the Duke; indeed it seemed as if a settlement was to be postponed *sine die*. At this juncture, the wily architect one day induced the Duke to mount with him to the roof of the house, in order to see the splendid view. His Grace, unsuspecting, became immersed in the beauty of the prospect, when Winde took the opportunity of locking the trap-door by which they had reached the leads, and then threw the key over the parapet. “I am a ruined man,” he exclaimed to the astonished Duke, “and unless I receive your word of honour that the debts incurred by this building shall be paid directly, I will instantly throw myself over.” “And what is to become of me?” said the Duke. “Why, you shall accompany me,” was the staggering reply. Needs must when such a devil of an architect drives, and the promise was immediately given; when the trap-door was opened, on a preconcerted signal, by one of Winde’s workmen.²

There seems to have been a consensus of praise bestowed on the beauty of the red-brick building which arose on the site of Arlington House, one poet calling it “a princely palace,” another, no less a one than Pope, affirming that it had all the excellent attributes of a “country house in the summer, and a town house in the winter;” even the hypercritical

¹ There is extant a very rare etching of the mansion, showing a large cupola that dominated the roof, reproduced in Larwood’s *Story of the London Parks*.

² *The Fine Arts in Great Britain*, by W. B. S. Taylor.

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Ralph is found approving, and stating that it "attracts more eyes, and has more admirers than almost any other house about town," which is certainly more than can be said of Nash's enormous pile which has taken its place; while M. de Saussure, who visited this country in 1725, specifically mentions it as one of the three finest mansions in London at that day. Macky, in his *Journey through England*, published in 1714, gives an elaborate description of the house, which he calls "one of the great beauties of London, both by reason of its situation and its building;" what its exterior looked like may be seen from extant views, but Macky's account is interesting and valuable as affording us a glimpse of the interior.

"It is situated," he writes, "at the west end of St. James's Park, fronting the Mall and the great walk; and behind it is a fine garden, a whole terrace (from whence as well as from the apartments, you have a most delicious prospect), and a little park with a pretty canal. The courtyard which fronts the Park is spacious; the offices are on each side divided from the Palace by two arching galleries, and in the middle of the court is a round basin of water, lined with freestone, with the figures of Neptune and the Tritons in a water-work. The staircase is large and nobly painted; and in the Hall before you ascend the stairs is a very fine statue of Cain slaying Abel in marble. The apartments are indeed very noble, the furniture rich, and many very good pictures. The top of the Palace is flat, on which one hath a full view of London and Westminster, and the adjacent country; and the four figures of Mercury, Secrecy, Equity, and Liberty, front the Park, and those of the Four Seasons the gardens," and he adds that "His Grace hath also put inscriptions on the four parts of his Palace. On the front towards the Park . . . the inscription is *Sic siti lætantur Lares*; and fronting the garden, *Rus in urbe*." Both of which mottoes may be said to have been singularly apposite, which is not always the case when inscriptions from the dead languages are pressed into the service of modern builders.

To this description we are luckily able to add something from the detailed account of the place addressed by its owner to the Duke of Shrewsbury, which is to be found at length, together with three vignettes of the mansion, in the Duke of Buckinghamshire's works, published in 1729. From this we find that the pictures hanging in the Hall which Macky mentions were "done in the school of Raphael"; that the parlour, reached from the Hall, was 33 feet by 39 feet, "with a niche 15 feet broad for a Bufette, paved with white marble, and placed within an arch, with Pilasters of divers colours, the upper part of which as high as the ceiling is painted by Ricci."

From another source we find that the ceiling of the saloon was executed

by Horatio Gentileschi, having been originally painted for Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham; it represented the nine Muses in a circle, surrounding Apollo, and was no less than eighteen feet in diameter. Walpole also mentions Bellucci, an Italian painter who came to this country, in 1716, as having painted a ceiling here in 1722, for which the Duchess paid him £500; and we know that Charles II. was first attracted to the work of Verrio by seeing some of his paintings in this mansion.

I need not recapitulate the whole of the Duke's lengthy description of his palace, but it is pleasant to read that "just under the windows" (of the book-room), "is a little wilderness full of blackbirds and nightingales," and that the trees grew so well and quickly that even those planted by the owner himself soon required lopping "to prevent their hindering the view of that fine canal in the Park"; and again that "a wall covered with roses and jassemine," was built low "to admit the view of a meadow full of cattle just under it." *Rus in urbe* indeed!¹

But even with all this there was the inevitable fly in the ointment, and we find the Duke "oftener missing a pretty gallery in the old house I pulled down than pleased with the salon which I built in its stead, tho' a thousand times better in all manner of respects." May we not ask with Horace—

"Qui fit, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem
Seu ratio dederit, seu fors objecerit, illa
Contentus vivat"?

On the death of the Duke, on February 24, 1721, Buckingham House was left to his third wife, daughter of James II. by Catherine Sedley; and two years later we find the Prince and Princess of Wales (afterwards George II. and Queen Caroline) in treaty for it; which, remembering its later history, is interesting.

But the Duchess wanted three thousand a year² as rent, and would take not less than £60,000 for it "as it stands, with furniture, pictures, gardens, meadows, and little tenements which pay one hundred and twenty pounds per annum," and she says rightly enough: "All his Majesty's revenue cannot purchase a place so well situated for a less sum; and indeed," she adds, "it is hardly worth for that, giving my son, when he grows up, the mortification to find such a house gone from him . . . a million cannot find him such a valuable one."

¹ As Mr. Blomfield points out, Buckingham House was one of the earliest examples of a mansion built on the plan of a large rectangular central block connected by colonnades with detached offices "treated as pavilions in advance of the main buildings, and forming three sides of the fore court."

² Her long letter on the matter, to Lady Suffolk, Queen Caroline's "good Howard," is in the *Suffolk Papers*, vol. i. pp. 113-117.

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We thus see that the Duchess was by no means a willing seller, and the matter, probably on account of lack of sufficient funds in the Prince's exchequer, fell through, so that her Grace was still able, as Walpole tells us was her custom, on the anniversary of the execution of Charles I. to receive Lord Hervey "in the Great Drawing Room of Buckingham House, seated in a chair of state, in deep mourning, attended by her women in like weeds, in memory of the royal martyr."

It was to Lord Hervey, the "Sporus" and "Lord Fanny" of Pope's bitter invective, that she left the property. He, however, never resided in it, and died in 1743, when it appears to have come into the possession of Sir Charles Sheffield, the natural son of the Duke of Buckinghamshire; the second and last Duke of this line having died in 1735. From Sir Charles the property was purchased by George III., in 1762, as a residence for Queen Charlotte, on whom it was afterwards settled by an Act of Parliament passed in 1775, the price paid being £28,000; another instance of the extraordinary fall in the value of real property under the Georges. With its conversion into a royal palace, we have no more to do with it; but it is interesting to know that in the library here Dr. Johnson had his famous interview with the King, when the Great Cham of literature found the manners of his sovereign "those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Lewis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second."¹

MONTAGU HOUSE, BLOOMSBURY

What the late Lord Salisbury was accustomed to say about the advantages of large maps in placing us *au courant* with international questions and the mysteries of boundary lines, holds good when we are studying the former outlines of our great city, and are attempting to rehabilitate some of its past glories. An investigation, indeed, of an authentic plan on a large scale, will, it is possible, teach us more than the most strenuous attempts of topographers to verbally reconstruct a locality or localise the position of some now almost forgotten landmark. This is particularly the case with the great house about which I want to say something now. If we look at that part of Morden and Lea's plan of London of 1732, which deals with the parish of St. Giles and its vicinity, we shall see the outlines of Montagu House and its garden very clearly marked, and we shall gain a good idea of the importance

¹ The present palace was built, partly by additions to the original house, in 1825, under Nash; partly by various additions made by Blore at the time of the accession of Queen Victoria.



MONTAGU HOUSE, BLOOMSBURY.

of the former and the extent of the latter. We shall see that having a long frontage to Great Russell Street, it was bounded on its north and west sides by open fields, a portion of which fields are traditionally interesting; and that on its eastern boundary stood Southampton House and its ample gardens, only less noble in size than Montagu House itself, and about which I shall have some remarks to make later on. Of the principal front and great courtyard of Montagu House we can also gain an excellent idea from the print published in 1714, which is here reproduced; and of its history and interior decorations, as well as of its precursor which was destroyed by fire, every writer on London has had something to say.

The first Montagu House appears to have been erected about 1675, by Ralph Montagu, who succeeded his father as third Baron Montagu of Boughton in 1683, and who died in 1709, having been created an earl in 1689, and a duke in 1705. Evelyn, who always took an early opportunity of inspecting any new building, went to see the place on May 11, 1676. "I dined with Mr. Charleton," he writes, "and went to see Mr. Montague's new palace neere Bloomsbury, built by Mr. Hooke of our Society (*i.e.* the Royal Society), after the French manner."

Robert Hooke, although he is not included by Walpole among the architects of the day, was a well-known man, for other reasons. He was a famous mathematician, and besides was the inventor of spring clocks and pocket watches, and held the important post of Curator to the Royal Society, as well as that of Professor of Geometry at Gresham College. The fact that he is ignored by Walpole is the more singular seeing that he was largely employed in the reconstruction of that part of the town destroyed in the Great Fire. Pepys speaks of him as one "who is the most, and promises the least, of any man in the world that ever I saw," and refers to his book on Microscopy as "a most excellent piece," and he seems on one occasion to have interested worthy Samuel in such an unexhilarating process as that of felt-making; and at another time to have rather mystified him by a discourse on musical sounds, which though above the head of the Diarist, he, nevertheless, found to be "mighty fine"; indeed, Pepys, as a member of the Royal Society, was thrown much in Hooke's company, and whenever he mentions him, it is generally to record some piece of information imparted either in conversation or at one of the lectures at Gresham College, and always to Pepys's "great content." Hooke, indeed, seems to have been an all-round man to whose mind nothing came amiss, and once Evelyn, calling at The Durdens at Epsom, found him, with Sir William Petty and Dr. Wilkins, "contriving chariots, new rigging for ships, a wheele for one to run races in, and other mechanical inventions," and he adds: "Perhaps three

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such persons together were not to be found elsewhere in Europe for parts and ingenuity.”¹

I have loitered somewhat over Dr. Hooke, because the architect of such an admittedly fine mansion as Montagu House seemed to require a few words, particularly as he was, in other respects, so accomplished a man.

The nobleman for whom he designed the house was not less notable in a different sphere—that of politics and diplomacy. He had been Master of the Horse to Katherine of Braganza; in 1666, he was sent as Ambassador Extraordinary to Paris, and three years later was resident Ambassador in that capital; in 1672, he was made a Privy Councillor, and four years later was again entrusted with a special mission to France, as he was again in the following year. For about five years he represented Northampton and Huntingdon in Parliament; and on the top of other honours, was created Marquis of Monthermer, and Duke of Montagu in 1705, four years before his death. He married twice; first, Elizabeth, Dowager-Countess of Northumberland, and secondly, Elizabeth, Dowager-Duchess of Albemarle—“the mad Duchess,” as she was called.

Montagu House was evidently completed and furnished by the end of 1679, for we find Evelyn paying another visit there, on November 5th of that year, and noting the beauty of its contents, but complaining that the garden, though fine, was “too much expos’d,” which, however, considering that it was open to the fields, its owner probably thought a distinct advantage. Four years later the Diarist paid yet another visit to the place, in company with the newly-married Duchess of Grafton and her father the Earl of Arlington, then Lord Chamberlain. Evelyn speaks of the mansion as “a stately and ample palace,” and mentions particularly “Signr. Verrio’s fresco paintings, especially the funeral pile of Dido, on the stayrecase, the labours of Hercules, fight with the Centaurs, effeminacy with Dejanira, and Apotheosis or reception among the gods, on ye walls, and rooffe of the greate roome above,” which he says “exceeds anything he has yet done, both for designe, colouring, and exuberance of invention, comparable to ye greatest of the old masters, or what they celebrate in Rome,” which, when we remember Pope’s “sprawling saints of Verrio,” shows how differently ages judge artistic merit. Unfortunately Evelyn does not particularise the other pictorial decorations in the house, except to remark generally that “in the rest of the chambers are some excellent paintings of Holbein and other masters.” Of the exterior he says: “The garden is large, and in good aire, but the front of the house not answerable to the inside. The court

¹ Narcissus Luttrell records the death of Hooke, which took place on March 3, 1703.

is entrie, and wings for offices, seeme too neare the streete, and that so very narrow and meanly built that the corridore is not in proportion to ye rest, to hide the court from being overlooked by neighbours, all which might have been prevented had they placed the house further into ye ground,¹ of which there is enough to spare." "But," he concludes, "it is a fine palace."

It is impossible to say what Mr. Montagu expended in decoration and building, apart from the furniture, pictures, &c., on Montagu House; but on the back of a list of charges made by Verrio for work done at Windsor, is written: "More from Mr. Montagu of London . . . £800"; which obviously refers to frescoes executed at Montagu House.

The house seems for a time to have been let to the fourth Earl of Devonshire, who had only recently succeeded to the title (November 25, 1684), and was afterwards created a duke, in 1694; and he appears to have been paying 500 guineas a year for it, when in the early hours of Wednesday morning, January 19, 1686, the disastrous fire occurred here which practically destroyed everything. A contemporary letter² thus records the cause of the unfortunate event: "On Wednesday, at one in the morning, a sad fire happened at Montagu House in Bloomsbury, occasioned by the steward's airing some hangings, &c., in expectation of my Lord Montagu's return home, and sending afterwards a woman to see that the fire-pans with charcoal were removed, which she told him she had done, though she never came there. The loss that my Lord Montagu has sustained by this accident is estimated at £40,000, besides £6000 in plate; and my Lord Devonshire's loss in pictures, hangings, and other furniture, is very considerable." Evelyn recording the fire says that "for painting and furniture there was nothing more glorious in England," than what was contained in Lord Montagu's palace.

Its owner appears to have lost no time in rebuilding the house, the architect on this occasion being Peter Paul Puget,³ or Monsieur Pouget, as Walpole terms him, who appears to have been sent for from his native France, to prepare designs for a new mansion. Walpole, who allots just five lines to this architect whose Christian name he evidently did not know, speaks of him as conducting the building of Montagu House in 1678, perhaps merely a clerical error by the inversion of the last two figures. The new design after the French style, apparently followed out the lines of the earlier house, the new palace being built

¹ He means, of course, farther back from the main street.

² *Ellis Correspondence*, 2nd series, vol. iv. p. 89. See also an interesting reference to this event in *The Autobiography of Sir John Bramston*.

³ He is sometimes called Pierre Puget or Poughet.

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on the original foundations, so that its extent was probably identical with that of its predecessor.

Even Lord Montagu's large resources must have been strained, when we consider the great loss he had sustained and the vast expense of the new house ; especially when we remember, too, that a number of French artists were employed to do what Verrio had done before. Of these the principal were Jacques Rousseau, Charles de la Fosse, and Jean Baptiste Monnoyer,¹ who were all employed on the work of beautifying the place.

Rousseau received £1500 for what he did, besides which Lord Montagu allowed him an annuity of £200 which he enjoyed but two years ; and as he died in Soho Square, in 1694, it shows that he was continued on at Montagu House long after it was completed. Among La Fosse's work here were two ceilings, one representing the "Apotheosis of Isis," the other an "Assembly of the Gods."²

Although Lord Montagu did not fill the high place occupied by a Prime Minister which seems invariably to attract the fierce light which blackens every blot, yet his connection with the Court of France in his ambassadorial capacity, and his exclusive patronage of French artists, laid him open to the charge that his new house was built with money received from the French king !—one of those popular fallacies of which the eighteenth century contributed several examples ; indeed the writer of Ackermann's *Microcosm of London* seriously repeats this, and further states that Louis sent over the French artists to decorate the new house, as Lord Montagu's spirits had become so greatly depressed by the loss of the earlier mansion, he being at the time of the fire Ambassador in Paris. Taylor, on the other hand, gives this version of the matter : "When the Duke of Montagu was Ambassador at Paris, he changed Hotels with the French Ambassador, who was sent to England, and during his residence the first Montagu House was destroyed by fire. It was agreed between them that the Court of France should supply half the expenses of rebuilding, upon the condition that a French architect and painter should be employed. The object avowed was to teach the English how a perfect palace should be constructed and embellished." Which tale is very neatly constructed ; but what becomes of the Duke of Devonshire, who is known to have been renting the place ? Unless indeed, the low rent he paid, £500 per annum, was fixed on the understanding that the French Ambassador should occupy a portion of the great house.

Ralph, in his *Critical Review*, of course has some fault to find with

¹ There are a number of his pictures still in Montagu House, Whitehall, as we shall see.

² Walpole's *Anecdotes*.

the new building, but as, apparently, he was rather baffled over the main portion, he falls foul of the brick wall which hid the mansion from public view so that it could only be seen from within the vast courtyard; Evelyn, we remember, found fault with the former mansion because it was overlooked! On the whole, however, the praise outweighs the depreciation, and M. Grosley, the French traveller who came to these shores many years later, writes that "*L'hôtel Montaignu mérite une distinction particulière. Par son étendue, par ses distributions, par la magnificence de ses ornemens, par l'agrément de sa position, il a plus l'air d'une maison royale que de l'hôtel d'un particulier.*"¹

There were twelve principal rooms on the ground floor, and the same number on the first floor, and all these were of vast size and height, and admirably lighted, fully bearing out what Walpole says of "the spacious lofty magnificence of the apartments"; half of them overlooking the courtyard, and as many enjoying the prospect over the gardens, and the open fields beyond.

The curious may see a ground plan of the house which is contained in Dodsley's *Environs of London*, published in 1761; while Pugin and Britton, in their *Public Edifices of London*, 1823, also give one. The noble staircase, with its mural paintings, is admirably represented in Ackermann's *Microcosm of London*, and gives a better idea of how the interior of one of these old private palaces looked than any other drawing with which I am familiar.

The Duke of Montagu died in 1709, and was succeeded by his son Sir John Montagu as second Duke; but he also left behind him his eccentric second wife, who had married him as Emperor of China, she being quite mad at the time; why his Grace married her at all is one of those mysteries at which imagination boggles. The Duchess was kept in her apartment on the ground floor at Montagu House, during the life of her husband, and was then, and afterwards till her death, served on the knee presumably as Empress of the Celestial Empire;² but on his Grace's death there seems to have been some question as to who was to have the care of her. The second Duke was her stepson, and therefore I suppose did not consider himself responsible for her safe keeping; and by a letter of Peter Wentworth to his brother, dated March 15, 1709, it would seem that his wife was as firm.³ In any case there was much difficulty in persuading the old lady to give up the

¹ *Londres*, vol. i. p. 59.

² She died at Newcastle House, Clerkenwell, in 1734, where we have met with her.

³ See the *Wentworth Papers*, where there is a letter in French, of the same date, with further details of this curious case.

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house to its new and rightful owners, and her sisters the Duchess of Newcastle and Lady Thanet we read "*allèrent rendre visite a la Duchesse Douairière de Montaigne, leur soeur, et tachèrent inutilement de lui persuader de sortir de la maison de ce Duc, ou elle a été renfermée depuis tant d'années.*" However, she was at length taken to Newcastle House, and Montagu House and its Empress were parted. Colley Cibber wrote a scene, in his *Sick Lady Cured*, inspired by the imperial pretensions of the mad Duchess.

In those days of footpads and highwaymen even a duke could hardly traverse the town from the neighbourhood of Westminster to that of St. Giles with impunity, and it was probably this that caused, about 1732, the second Duke to commence building a new house in Whitehall where he eventually took up his permanent abode, whereupon old Montagu House remained for some years empty and neglected, and at last coming into the hands of Lord Halifax, that nobleman sold it to the Government, in 1754, for £10,250, for the purpose of a national repository for the various fine collections which Sir Hans Sloane had bequeathed to the country and which formed the nucleus of the British Museum¹ as we know it to-day. At the time of its acquisition by Parliament, the old house had become very dilapidated; indeed in so ruinous a condition was it found to be, that much more was spent on its repair than on its purchase, nearly £30,000 being found requisite to put it in a satisfactory state.

The materials were disposed of by auction, and such portions of the painted walls and ceilings as could be removed were sold for ridiculous sums—one of La Fosse's deities for half-a-crown, and a bunch of Monnoyer's flowers for eighteenpence.²

It is outside my scheme to follow the destinies of Montagu House after it ceased to be a private palace, but I may mention that various additions were made to the original structure to fit it for its new uses, and to cope with the rapidly increasing number and importance of its contents, till, in 1820, the present structure was commenced, behind the old house, and the valuable contents were removed gradually into the new building; similarly, says Timbs, "the principal front took the place of the old Montagu House façade, which was removed piecemeal; and strange it was to see the lofty pitched roof, balustraded attic, and large-windowed front of 'the French manner,' giving way to the Grecian architecture of Sir Robert Smirke's new design."

An excellent view of the back of old Montagu House is given in a

¹ The present buildings were completed in 1847; two years previously the last remains of the old Montagu House had disappeared.

² Timbs, *Romance of London*.

print entitled "Encampment of troops in the gardens of the British Museum at the time of the Gordon Riots, 1780." Into these gardens, on this occasion, Lord and Lady Mansfield escaped by a back gate when the mob attacked and ransacked their house in Bloomsbury Square.¹

The fields behind the gardens require a word, for they were, from towards the end of the seventeenth century till the middle of the eighteenth, the favourite place for duels; the plays, novels, and the pages of the daily press containing many references to encounters "behind Montagu House."² One of the most notable of these was that which took place in 1692, between Charles Knollys, who claimed to be fourth Earl of Banbury, and his brother-in-law, Captain Lawson of the Guards, in which the latter was killed, and the former arraigned for murder. He was tried before Lord Justice Hall and two other judges, and when accused of the crime as Charles Knollys, he replied that he was not Charles Knollys but Earl of Banbury, a plea which was allowed by the judges, and through which technicality he escaped the extreme penalty of the law. The House of Lords had, however, on the vexed question of this peerage decided that Knollys was not Earl of Banbury, and so furious were the peers with the judges for tacitly acknowledging his right to the title, that they summoned them to the bar of the House, but were unable to make them alter their decision. The whole matter of the celebrated Banbury peerage case cannot of course be entered into here, but I would remind the reader that the question has never yet been settled, and that the title bestowed some years since on Sir Francis Knollys is an entirely new creation, and in no sense a re-creation of the original peerage which Captain Edmund Knollys, the head of the family, still claims.³

A portion of the open ground behind Montagu House was known as "The Field of Forty Footsteps," or "The Brothers' Steps," on account of a desperate encounter between two brothers, rivals for the affections of a young lady who is said to have watched the fray. As they struggled together they are reported to have left these marks on the ground, on which subsequently the grass was believed never to grow. J. T. Smith records the incident in his *Book for a Rainy Day*, and the legend has been dealt with by several writers; and has supplied the *motif* for at least one novel. Torrington Square occupies the site of this portion of the fields, over which the windows of Montagu House looked. One other circumstance

¹ See the author's *History of the Squares of London*.

² Readers of Roderick Random will remember that Rourke Oregan waited there, "with a pair of good pistols" while Strap conducted the guard to the same locality.

³ The details of Lord Banbury's trial, which seems to have extended *over five years*, will be found in the *Diary* of Narcissus Luttrell, *passim*.

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connected with these meadows deserves notice, which I will give in the *ipsissima verba* of Aubrey, the antiquary, who narrates it: "The last summer, on the day of St. John the Baptist (1694), I accidentally was walking in the pasture behind Montagu House; it was twelve o'clock. I saw there about two or three and twenty young women, most of them well habited, on their knees very busie, as if they had been weeding. I could not presently hear what the matter was; at last a young man told me they were looking for a coal under the root of a plantain to put under their heads that night, and they should dream who would be their husbands. It was to be found that day and hour."¹

SOUTHAMPTON OR BEDFORD HOUSE

Adjoining the grounds of Montagu House on the east once stood Southampton or, as it was afterwards called, Bedford House. Morden and Lea's plan to which I have before referred, shows that its grounds covered almost as large an area as those of Montagu House, and if the mansion was not so large as its neighbour, it had this advantage, that it was set farther back from the road, as Evelyn said Montagu House should have been. As, also, in the case of Montagu House, two mansions successively stood here, where Bedford Place now runs, the former of which was the original manor-house of Bloomsbury, the seat of the Blemunds who gave their name to this district, which in those far-off times must have been as countrified as Harrow and a good deal more rural than Hampstead.

In Agas's plan of London, dated 1591, and in the earlier plan of 1560, old Southampton House is shown standing by itself among the fields. I have said something of this earlier structure in the first chapter, and from a careful comparison of old plans, &c., I have come to the conclusion that the original house stood to the south of the later mansion, probably about the south side of the present Bloomsbury Square where Southampton Street runs.²

As we have seen,³ there had once been a design to pull down the old house and to erect tenements on its site, which, however, came to nothing; and it was not till the reign of Charles II. that the latter palace was erected. In what year this actually took place is a little doubtful, but in any case, those who attribute the work to Inigo Jones are incorrect,

¹ *Miscellanies*. Brand in his *Popular Antiquities* records, much later, a somewhat similar superstition.

² The first Earl of Southampton obtained possession of the manor in the reign of Henry VIII.

³ Chap. i. p. 20.

for that great architect died in 1652, and certainly Southampton House was not erected till some years after that date. As, however, the elevations show some signs of his influence, it is probable that his pupil, and son-in-law, John Webb, was responsible for it.

Few of the exteriors of the former great houses of London are better known than that of Southampton House, for there are a number of views of it extant, that which is here reproduced being one of the best. By it one can see how imposing and even splendid was the building, and how extended its front, but what can also be seen is that Evelyn's criticism that its elevation was too low is a cogent one, and there is no doubt but that another attic storey would have vastly improved its appearance.

When the Diarist dined with Lord Southampton here, the latter was busy forming that "noble square or Piazza, a little towne," which Evelyn mentions and which we now know as Bloomsbury Square; and by the development of which the amenities of Southampton House were greatly enhanced. Contemporary criticism on the mansion is nearly always favourable, and foreigners particularly were struck with the solid grandeur of the pile, De Saussure considering it one of the finest private houses in London, and Grosley placing it second among the four which he thought alone comparable to the great hotels of Paris.

As in the case of so many of these old London houses, the gardens attached to Southampton House were no less a feature than the mansion itself, and some idea of their extent may be gained when we remember that in breadth they were double the frontage of the house which itself occupied the whole of the north side of Bloomsbury Square, and that they reached north nearly to the centre of what is now Russell Square.

Dobie, the historian of Bloomsbury, writing in 1834, speaks of distinctly recollecting "the venerable grandeur" of the mansion "shaded with a thick foliage of magnificent lime trees"; and he records that "the fine verdant lawn extended a considerable distance between these, and was guarded by a deep ravine to the north, from the intrusive steps of the daring, whilst in perfect safety were grazing various breeds of foreign and other sheep, which from their singular appearance excited the gaze and admiration of the curious." There were, too, a number of trees in the front of the house, among which the graceful acacia¹ was once to be seen, as well as the limes already mentioned, which must have been those that Sorbière in his *Voyage en Angleterre* speaks of, when he says "*on voit les arbres du Palais de Bethford par dessus la muraille.*" This wall was also a feature of the building, and Letitia Hawkins, in her *Memoirs*, mentions "The wall before Bedford House, a wall of singular beauty and

¹ Walpole's *Essay on Gardening*.

elegance which extended on the north side of Bloomsbury Square from east to west, and the gates of which were decorated with those lovely monsters, sphinxes, very finely carved"; while she also speaks of the house as being "a long, low white edifice, kept, in the old Duke's time,¹ in the nicest state of good order, and admirably in unison with the snow-white livery of the family. It had noble apartments and a spacious garden, which opened to the fields; and the uninterrupted freedom of air, between this situation and the distant hills, gave it the advantages of an excellent town house and a suburban villa."

Evelyn, in 1665, had noted the excellence of the air; but at that time the ground had not been properly matured, and he had to confess that the garden was "naked."

The fields referred to by Miss Hawkins as bounding the property on the north, shared, in the seventeenth, and for a considerable period of the eighteenth, century, the bad reputation of those contingent ones behind Montagu House, as a place for duels. Mountfort, the actor, a victim in one such encounter, mentions the fact in the epilogue to his *Greenwich Park*, and the pages of Luttrell and other contemporary writers will be found to contain frequent references to this spot as a chosen place for men of quality to settle their, sometimes extraordinarily trivial, differences; the isolated position of the ground and the very primitive methods of policing the capital then in vogue, insuring a maximum of privacy, and a minimum of risk of apprehension to the victor.

Southampton House passed to the Russell family in this wise. Its builder, the fourth Earl of Southampton, one of the most loyal adherents of Charles I., who, luckier than many, neither lost his life nor the whole of his fortune in the service of his master, died in the mansion, on May 16, 1667; but although he had been married three times, he left no male heir to succeed him, and the property passed to his daughter, Lady Rachel Wriothesley, who had married, in 1669, William, Lord Russell,² son of the first Duke of Bedford, and thus became the Lady Rachel Russell, so well known for her charm, abilities, and sad fortunes.³

William, Lord Russell and Lady Rachel resided at Bedford House,

¹ The fifth Duke of Bedford, born 1760, died 1802.

² She had been previously married to Lord Vaughan, eldest son of the Earl of Carberry.

³ William, Lord Russell, is often spoken of as Lord William Russell, and as he was the younger son of the Duke, this is not incorrect; but his elder brother predeceasing him, he was known by the courtesy title of Lord Russell, the second title of Marquis of Titchfield not being used until borne by Lord Russell's son when he became heir to the dukedom. Similarly Lady Rachel Russell is the correct designation of this lady, as she was the daughter of an earl, and married one who only bore a courtesy title. Of such are the titular intricacies that trouble foreigners.

as it now began to be called,¹ and he was here at the time the charges for high treason were brought against him, when a message from the Council ordered a guard to be set at the gate to stop him if he attempted to leave his residence; the back entrance, however, was not watched, so that had he chosen he might have escaped that way, but such a course would have been in his opinion and that of his friends too much like a confession of guilt, and he remained until he was taken to the Tower.

All the world knows the story of that famous trial. Few things are so pathetic as the spectacle of the innocent gentleman defended by his noble wife with all the acumen of a professional advocate and the ardour of a deep affection; two lambs trying to save an already judged cause, against the brutal Jeffreys, whose character refuses to be whitewashed, the offensive Saunders, Pemberton the whilom rake and debauché, and Scroggs, the butcher's son. What could avail before such a tribunal! how could truth hope to conquer against men whose instincts and prejudices made them only too ready to accept the evidence of perjured wretches like Rumsey and Howard of Escrick!

When the result of the trial was known, James Duke of York, if it can be believed, proposed that, as an additional ignominy, Lord Russell should be beheaded before the very windows of Bedford House; but to his credit, Charles, who with all his faults cannot be compared with his brother for spite and cowardice, would not consent to such a refinement of cruelty, and the last sad scene took place in Lincoln's Inn Fields. On the way there, the cortège passed Bedford House, and Burnet tells how, as the victim looked for a moment at his once happy home, his fortitude almost deserted him; but suppressing his emotion he exclaimed, "The bitterness of death is now passed," and Tillotson, who accompanied him, saw some tears fall from his eyes.

This judicial murder took place in 1683, and after it Lady Rachel continued to reside in what she pathetically terms "that desolate habitation of mine . . . a place of terror to me," till her death there, in 1723.

In the meantime her son had succeeded to the Dukedom of Bedford in 1700, and resided here with her. He was but six years old when the great fire at Montagu House took place, and is referred to in Lady Rachel's account of the disaster which she wrote to Dr. Fitzwilliam, a few days after the event, in these words: "If you have heard of the dismal accident in this neighbourhood you will easily believe that Tuesday night was not a quiet one with us. About one o'clock in the

¹ One of Lady Rachel's letters is dated Russell House, showing that for a time at least it was so termed.

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night I heard a great noise in the Square, so little ordinary, I called up a servant, and sent her down to hear the occasion; she brought up a very sad one, that Montagu House was on fire; and it was so indeed; it burnt with so great violence, the house was consumed by five o'clock. The wind blew strong this way, so that we lay under fire a great part of the time, the sparks and flames covering the house and filling the court. My boy awoke and said he was almost suffocated with smoke, but being told the reason, would see it, and so was satisfied without fear; and took a strange bedfellow very willingly, Lady Devonshire's youngest boy, whom his nurse had brought wrapt in a blanket. Thus we see what a day brings forth, and how momentary the things are we set our hearts upon."

The boy mentioned here, who became, as I have said, Duke of Bedford in 1700, married, in 1695, Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of John Howland of Streatham, and died in 1711, when he was succeeded by his son as third Duke, and he, in turn, in 1732, by his brother—"the little Duke," as Walpole calls him, against whom Junius poured forth the vials of his rhetorical anger and abuse.

Under the régime of this holder of the title, Bedford House seems to have entered on a period of greater gaiety than had before characterised it; and we read, *inter alia*, of a great masquerade given here by the Duke in 1748, which was graced by the presence of the King and the Duke of Cumberland, and which is said to have been the most gorgeous masked ball ever given up to that time. Walpole records two other balls at Bedford House, at a later date; one in May 1755, about which, writing to Bentley, he says: "The night the King went (to Hanover) there was a magnificent ball and supper at Bedford House. The Duke¹ was there: he was playing at hazard with a great heap of gold before him: somebody said, he looked like the prodigal son and the fatted calf both. In the dessert was a model of Walton Bridge in glass."

The other great entertainment mentioned by Walpole occurred four years later, and, writing on April 26, 1759, to George Montagu, he gives some details of it thus: "The ball at Bedford House on Monday was very numerous and magnificent. The two princes were there, deep hazard, and the Dutch deputies who are a proverb for their dullness. . . . But the delightful part of the night was the appearance of the Duke of Newcastle. . . . The Duchess (of Bedford) was at the very upper end of the gallery . . . and Newcastle had nobody to attend him but Sir Edward Montagu, who kept pushing him all up the gallery. From thence he went into the hazard-room, and wriggled and shuffled,

¹ The Duke of Cumberland.

and lisped and winked, and spied, till he got behind the D. of Cumberland, the D. of Bedford and Rigley."

Besides these splendid indoor receptions, for which Bedford House became, at this period, famous, the Duchess was fond of giving *al fresco* entertainments, for which the grounds of the mansion were admirably adapted; and on one occasion her Grace sent out cards to her friends "to take tea and walk in the fields"! This lady was the Duke's second wife, whom he married in 1737.¹

The Duke, who had filled in his time a number of great offices in connection with his administration, of which Junius fell foul of him, died in 1771, and was succeeded by his grandson, Francis Russell, who was the last Duke to occupy Bedford House; for two years before his death, which occurred in 1802, he disposed of the property. On May 7, 1800,² was commenced here by Mr. Christie, the sale of the contents of the great house, the materials of which alone fetched between £5000 and £6000, and the names of some of the pictures, with the prices they realised, have happily been preserved. Thus the copies of Raphael's cartoons, by Sir James Thornhill, which the Duke had placed in a gallery specially constructed to receive them, and for which he had paid at the sale of the artist's collection but £200, were purchased by the Duke of Norfolk for £450; Raphael's "St. John Preaching in the Wilderness" went for the absurd sum of 95 guineas; and the representation of the "Archduke Leopold's Gallery" by Teniers, for 210 guineas. A painting of an Italian villa, by Gainsborough, fetched 90 guineas; a landscape by Cuyp, 200 guineas; and a set of four battle pieces by Cassanovi, only realised 15 guineas each, although they had cost the Duke more than sixteen times that amount. There was also included in the sale a picture of peculiar interest, depicting the famous duel, in Hyde Park, between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun; while some pieces of sculpture were also disposed of, notably a Venus de Medicis and an Antinous in bronze, which went for 20 guineas; and what is described as a "Venus couchant, from the antique," which fetched a similar amount. The account of the sale is to be seen in the *Annual Register* of the day, the writer of which adds that: "The week after, were sold the double rows of lime trees in the garden, valued one at £90 the other at £80; which are now all taken down, and the site of a new square, of nearly the dimensions of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and to be called Russell Square,

¹ The first was Lady Diana Spencer, daughter of Charles, third Earl of Sunderland; she died in 1734; the second, Lady Gertrude Leveson-Gower, daughter of John, Earl Gower.

² In Mr. George Redford's *History of Art Sales*, two sales of pictures belonging to this Duke are mentioned; one in May 1796, and that referred to in the text, but no details are given.

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has been laid out. The famous statue of Apollo, which was in the hall at Bedford House, has been removed to Woburn Abbey . . . it originally cost 1000 guineas."

The reasons that induced the Duke of Bedford to give up so fine a mansion as Bedford House are not very obvious. Society had not as yet migrated so completely to the further west as to leave the place in an isolated position ; nor had the house been allowed to get into such a state of disrepair as would have made its reparation as costly as the erection of a new residence. We know indeed that when, about 1757, the new road from Paddington to Islington, now the Marylebone and Euston Roads, was proposed, the fourth Duke strenuously opposed it, because, says Walpole, "of the dust it will make behind Bedford House, and also on account of "some buildings proposed," "though if he were in town," adds Walpole, who remarks that in summer he never was, "he is too short-sighted to see the prospect"; and it may possibly have been that the inconvenience foreseen by the Duke was ultimately responsible for his successor giving up the house.

It is interesting to know that just as Montagu House had once been in danger of demolition by the fury of the Gordon Rioters, some years previously, in May 1765 to be precise, the Spital Fields weavers, smarting under some real and many imaginary grievances, made an attack on the wall of Bedford House, and began to demolish it, tearing up the flagstones and palings in the road in front of it; and it is probable that, had they not been prevented by the footguards who had been stationed here in anticipation of something of the kind and who were reinforced by some cavalry, the rioters would have made an attack on the house itself. The Duke of Bedford was at this time Lord President of the Council, and thus being a member of the Government was more or less a marked man, and had to fear the physical force of popular resentment as well as the invectives of the redoubtable Junius.



LEICESTER HOUSE, LEICESTER FIELDS.

CHAPTER IV

LEICESTER HOUSE, ETC.

A NUMBER of fine houses that have either entirely passed away, or have been relegated to uses which prevent their being considered as private residences any longer, and did not, for a variety of reasons, lend themselves to separate treatment in the way those do which we shall presently be considering, can hardly be omitted from these pages. Those which take their place in the first category are Leicester House, once the glory of Leicester Square; Harcourt House, until recently on the west side of Cavendish Square; Ashburnham House, up to a few years since standing in Dover Street; Monmouth House, formerly in Soho Square, and Craven House, Drury Lane, identified in earlier days with the fortunes of the gallant Lord Craven. While those which, although still in existence, we can no longer claim as private palaces, are Marlborough House,¹ Pall Mall; Hertford or, as it was formerly called, Manchester House, in Manchester Square; Cambridge House, now the Naval and Military Club, Piccadilly; Uxbridge House, in Burlington Street; Melbourne House, now The Albany; Newcastle House, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Schomberg House (although only a wing of this still exists) in Pall Mall.²

LEICESTER HOUSE

Leicester House was so closely identified with the opposition courts successively held there, by George, Prince of Wales, afterwards George II., and by his son Frederick, Prince of Wales, that one is apt to forget that other interesting personalities, not of regal birth, were once connected

¹ Kensington Palace was formerly known as Nottingham House, but its chief interest, both intrinsic and architectural, as I have before said, is associated with it as a Royal Palace.

² I have judged it unnecessary to say anything about Holland House, which, besides being rather outside my area, would have required a volume to itself, and has indeed had one, in Princess Marie Liechtenstein's well-known work; similarly the great houses that once lent dignity and interest to Chelsea, have been sufficiently dealt with in the Rev. A. G. L'Estrange's *Village of Palaces*.

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with it ; but it is for this latter reason that a short notice of it seems admissible in these pages.

The house was erected by Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester, in the time of Charles I., that nobleman having succeeded John Wymonde Carewe in the occupancy of the ground on which it stood, formerly belonging to the Hospital of St. Giles, which by exchange had then passed into the hands of the Crown, by whom it was granted to Lord Lisle, who in turn conveyed it to Carewe.

The mansion stood on the north-east side of what is now Leicester Square but was then called Leicester Fields, and lay back a considerable way from the road, having an ample courtyard in front ; while its gardens extended as far as Gerrard Street in the rear, as may be seen by the view of the Fields taken about 1700. The original residence was a building of ample and even stately proportions built round a courtyard with a projecting centre on its south side, its gardens extending practically over the whole of what is now the north side of the Square, and being divided from a large open tract of ground by an extensive wall. It was for long identified with the noble family of the Sidneys, and it was the second member of this family, originally ennobled by the title of Earl of Leicester in 1618, who erected the later house, probably between the years 1632 and 1636, on his return from his embassy to Denmark in the former year.

Here the Earl continued to reside until the later years of his life, when the mansion seems to have been occupied by various members of his family who desired a temporary town house ; while it was occasionally let when not in use in this way. During the Civil Wars, however, when Charles had become a prisoner, the Parliament placed the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Elizabeth under the care of Lord Leicester, and they must have spent some time in Leicester House in the intervals of their sojourn at Penshurst. The house was to have another Royal visitor, in the time of Charles II., during a very short time however, for the Queen of Bohemia had made arrangements to remove hither from Bohemia Palace, as it was called, next to Craven House, in February 1662, and indeed did so, but the hand of death was already upon her, and she died within a fortnight of taking up her residence here. Some years later Colbert, the French Ambassador, and brother of the more famous minister of Louis XIV., occupied the house, and Pepys records that a deputation of the Royal Society waited upon him here, on September 21, 1668. Just thirty years later the Imperial Ambassador was likewise lodged here, and a few years later still Prince Eugene, then on a secret mission to this country, resided in the mansion ; so that the

interest of its various occupants was no less marked than the size and importance of the house itself.

In 1718 it was to become, instead of a private residence and merely a temporary resting-place for royal personages and ambassadors, a permanent abode of royalty, for in that year George, Prince of Wales, having quarrelled with his father, and being expelled from St. James's, bought the mansion and took up his abode there, and here three years later the Duke of Cumberland was born. The Prince occupied the place until his accession, in 1727, and it was he who purchased the adjoining Savile House and added it to the residence for the use of the Royal children; while it was from Leicester House that he issued his declaration on succeeding to the Crown. When, some years later, his son quarrelled with him, the latter became the owner of the house; from which double event Pennant not inaptly termed it "the pouting place of princes."

Here Frederick, Prince of Wales, died in 1751, and here his son George was proclaimed king, in 1760, and shortly after removed to St. James's Palace. The Princess-Dowager continued to reside here for another six years, when she, too, removing to Carlton House, the place fell from its high estate, and was occupied by various museums and exhibitions, the most important of which was the once famous collection of Sir Ashton Lever, which rejoiced in the high-sounding title of the Holophusikon. On the death of Sir Ashton in 1788, his assemblage of curious objects was sold, and Leicester House was not long afterwards demolished; New Lisle Street being formed through its gardens, and increasingly elaborate buildings being erected from time to time on the site of the mansion itself.¹

DRURY OR CRAVEN HOUSE

Nearly at the south-east corner of Drury Lane where it used to join Wych Street, and a little to the north of where the old Olympic Theatre stood, is a *cul de sac* known as Craven Buildings which preserves the name of the once famous and splendid Craven House, just as Drury Lane perpetuates the earlier designation of the mansion. The great improvement in the Strand, which has brought Kingsway into existence and resuscitated the ancient Aldwych, has swept away the Olympic, which

¹ Leicester House is too much identified as a Royal Palace to admit of any more extended notice than this summary review in these pages; but those who are interested in its annals will find much of interest about it in the various histories of London, and particularly in Tom Taylor's *Leicester Square*.

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stood practically on the site of the old house which must have been one of the most stately of any of those in this neighbourhood.¹

The original mansion is generally supposed to have been erected by Sir William Drury, who died in 1579, but there seems better authority for considering that an earlier member of the family, namely Sir Roger Drury, was its builder, and as he died in 1495, the better part of a century is thus added to its age. What seems probable is that, as in the case of so many of the old palaces of London, it was enlarged, or perhaps even rebuilt, and Sir William Drury may have been responsible for such additions. We know that he filled some important positions, such as that of the Marshal of Berwick, as well as that of Lord Justice to the Council in Ireland, and was besides a Knight of the Garter; and it is probable that the house that had descended to him was not sufficiently spacious for the state which he must necessarily have kept up, as the head of a great family and one moving in exalted official circles. Sir William had been one of the supporters of Queen Mary when her throne was threatened by the machinations of Northumberland and his puppets Guildford Dudley and Lady Jane Grey, and Elizabeth is known to have shown him marked favour; and once when he had advocated her alliance with the Duke of Anjou, she good-humouredly gave him a great clap on the shoulder and replied, "I will never marry; but I will ever bear goodwill and favour to those who have liked and favoured the same;"² and that the Queen held Lady Drury³ in affectionate esteem is proved by the sympathetic letter she wrote her on the death of Sir William. It is probable therefore that Elizabeth was a visitor at Drury House, which would alone have been sufficient to account for any enlargement Sir William may have made. By a curious coincidence, after its owner's death, Drury House was the scene of some of Essex's plotting against the Queen, where he met those malcontents who were ready enough to further his scheme of seizing the palace and the Tower; but whether Essex had taken the place or had found a congenial spirit in the successor of Sir William is not recorded.

Another member of the family, Sir Robert Drury, "a gentleman of a very noble state, and a more liberal mind," lived in Drury House at a later date, and here he received the celebrated Dr. Donne, giving him, according to Isaac Walton, "an useful apartment in his own large

¹ There is a good view of it, as well as a small plan, and another small picture of what remained of the mansion at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata*.

² Bowes MSS., quoted by Agnes Strickland.

³ Probably Lady Wylliams of Tame, who, according to Machyn, was married to William Drure, on October 10, 1560.

house in Drury Lane," where the Doctor and his family resided, and it was when the two friends were on a visit to Paris that Donne had his celebrated "vision" of his wife "with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms";¹ when a messenger being sent to England, it was found that at that very hour Mrs. Donne had given birth to a dead infant.

Bishop Hall, who wrote what he called the *Virgidemiarum*, or a *Toothless Satire*, was also a visitor at Drury House, from which it would appear that Sir Robert was a patron of literature of the more recondite order.

Drury House passed from the old family from whom it took its name to the Cravens, the most illustrious of whom was that William, first Earl of Craven, the hero of Kreuznach, who died here in 1697.

The original Craven House which Gerbier designed, apparently for Lord Craven's father, Sir William Craven; in 1620, was an imitation of Heidelberg, and was; subsequently, destroyed by fire; the second mansion was built by Captain Wynne, Gerbier's pupil, for the first Lord Craven, who was one of those fine unselfish characters which illumine the age in which they live. Besides being a great soldier, he was also as renowned in peace, and even the glory of his great victory pales before the heroism he displayed by remaining, one of the very few men of quality who did so, in London during the Great Plague, and endeavouring by his active philanthropy to mitigate something of the horrors of that awful scourge. He it was who built the Lazaretto or Hospital, on what was afterwards termed Pest House Fields, near where Golden Square now stands; well might Pennant call him "the intrepid soldier, the gallant lover, the genuine patriot."

"The gallant lover" refers to one of the most romantic episodes in his career; his devotion to the unfortunate Queen of Bohemia, "The Queen of Hearts," who was lodged next door to Craven House, as Drury House was now called, for about six months when she came to this country in 1661; and only left it, as we have seen, to die in Leicester House close by.

Lord Craven, who, it has been said, was married to the Queen, arranged everything for her comfort here and at Leicester House; and for many years previously, after the overthrow of what little power her husband the Elector Palatine ever possessed, she as his widow seems to have lived on the bounty of her faithful adherent.

When Craven House was rebuilt by Lord Craven,² he also erected

¹ See a long account of this curious incident in Walton's *Life of Donne*, 1805, vol. i. p. 35 *et seq.*

² He was created a Viscount and Earl of Craven, in 1664, by Charles II., who gave him the Colonelcy of the Coldstream Guards on the death of Monk, Earl of Albemarle.

another mansion, called Bohemia House or Palace, next to it, as a residence¹ for his Royal mistress, according to Timbs, although in a plan, dated 1788, the place is shown marked "Bohemia Palace or Craven House," as if the two residences were identical.

The extensive gardens attached to Craven House afforded their owner an opportunity of indulging his love of horticulture, and of receiving such sympathetic friends as Ray and Evelyn; and Leigh Hunt, referring to this, says: "The garden of Craven House ran in the direction of the present Drury Lane; so that where there is now a bustle of a very different sort, we may fancy the old soldier busying himself with his flower beds, and John Evelyn discoursing upon the blessing of peace and privacy." In 1723, these gardens were built over, and Craven Buildings erected on their site; while formerly on the wall at the bottom of these buildings was to be seen a large fresco painting of Lord Craven mounted on his charger, which, however, after being repainted once or twice, was covered with plaster and finally destroyed. Craven House gradually fell into decay, being let out as tenements, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century entirely demolished; the Olympic Theatre was built on its site, by Astley, in 1805.

HARCOURT HOUSE

Although Harcourt House has disappeared, it did so such a short time since that its sombre exterior is within the recollection of most of us. Occupying nearly the whole of the west side of Cavendish Square, it could but be partially seen rising above the wall which effectually screened its chief rooms from the gaze of the *profanum vulgus*. I recollect going over it not long before it was demolished, and nothing then could have exceeded the dreariness of its interior, except perhaps the gloom which sat perpetually on its outward walls. The very size of its rooms, and the remains of their former magnificence, with their elaborately carved and moulded cornices; their ceilings painted *en grisaille* and their fine old chimney-pieces, added to the sense of desolation which seemed to have irrevocably settled on the whole place; there was something pathetic in seeing the last sad days of what had once enjoyed so full and splendid a life; but at the same time one could not but remember that a portion of its career had been passed under a shadow sufficiently gloomy as to anticipate its final decline and fall.

¹ It is known that he erected, at a cost of £60,000, a fine house at Hampstead Marshall, in Berkshire, for her use. It was largely altered by Captain Wynne; and was burnt down in 1718.

When Cavendish Square was laid out in 1717, the first house to be completed was what was, in the original numbering, No. 15, later known as Harcourt House. Besides being the first, it was by far the largest and most important residence in the Square, although had the Duke of Chandos completed the immense erection which he designed to occupy the whole of the north side of the Square, Harcourt House, ample as it was, would have sunk into comparative insignificance; but the Duke never completed, indeed he never even commenced, the main portion of his intended palace, and thus Harcourt House was and remained the dominating building in this "quadrate." It was erected for Robert Benson, Lord Bingley, whose name appears in the Rate Books for 1730, the first stone being laid in 1722.

Robert Benson, of Red Hall, near Wakefield, and of Bramham Park, sat in Parliament for many years as member for York; subsequently filling many Government offices, such as that of Lord of the Treasury, from August 1710 to April 1711, and including that of Chancellor of the Exchequer;¹ he was created Lord Bingley in 1713. Lady Wentworth, writing to her son on April 28, 1709, thus refers to him: "Your brother Wentworth tels me Mr. Benson is to loock affter your buildin in Yorkshire. I have found him out to be an old acquaintance of myne, his father was your father's mortell ennemy . . . I have kist him many a time; he was a very prety boy, he has a good estate." According to the *Caractères de plusieurs Ministres de la Cour d'Angleterre*, supposed to have been written by Lord Raby, Robert Benson is described as of "no extraction," his father having been "an attorney and no great character for an honest man . . . concerned in the affairs of Oliver Cromwell"; and the story Peter Wentworth tells of his son's application to the Heralds' College for supporters, when he was made a Peer, confirms this; for reply was sent him that "they could find no arms to be supported"!

It is, however, in view of the great house he erected in Cavendish Square, interesting to know that he was considered a great amateur authority on building matters; and he gave good advice in this connection to Lord Raby through Peter Wentworth, on one occasion; while Lord Bute (the father of George III.'s Minister), writing to Lord Strafford, remarks that "your lordship is pleas'd to be so mery with your humble servant as to prefer my loe taste in architecture to the consummated experience of Bingley." It will be remembered that it was through the

¹ It would seem, from a letter of Peter Wentworth, dated November 7, 1710, that this was anticipated, and I find that on Harley being made Earl of Oxford, Benson was again named for the post, which he held from May 1711 to 1713. See *Wentworth Papers*, p. 197, and Lady Cowper's *Diary*, p. 31.

representations of Colin Campbell and Benson; that Wren was dismissed from the office of Surveyor-General; in 1718; after having held the post for fifty years; in favour of Benson's brother.

In the *Vitruvius Britannicus* published by Campbell is a design for a house at Wilbury, by Benson; so that, in the absence of any actual knowledge as to who was the architect of Harcourt House, it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was largely built from plans prepared by himself; and although in the Crowle Pennant there is a design for the house, "as it was drawn by Mr. Archer, but built and altered to what it now is by Edward Wilcox, Esq.," this would seem to refer to enlargements, &c., made by the second Lord Harcourt.¹

Lord Bingley married Lady Elizabeth Finch, eldest daughter of Heneage, Earl of Aylesford, a long epigram on which lady from the hand of Walpole may be found in one of his letters to Mann.

In *London and its Environs*, a Mr. Lane is given as succeeding Lord Bingley in the tenancy of the house, but his name does not appear in the Rate Books, after Lord Bingley's disappears; whereas Lord Harcourt, who had been living previously in a smaller house on the east side of the Square with his father, is given as "Harcott," at No. 15, for 1732; in 1735 both his name and that of Lady Harcourt are given as living in separate houses here, and in 1738, the name of the lady alone appears. It would appear that Simon, first Lord Harcourt, sometime Lord Chancellor, had occupied the house on the east side of the Square, as he is said to have died in it on July 28, 1727, and that when his son bought No. 15, the Dowager Lady Harcourt (mentioned in the Rate Books) probably still occupied the smaller house on the east side of the Square. Walpole called Simon, the second Lord Harcourt, who was created an Earl in 1749, "civil and sheepish," but he filled a number of high offices with some success, although Wraxall considered his manner "too grave and measured" for him to acquire general attachment in Ireland, where he was Lord-Lieutenant from 1772 till 1777.

The second Earl Harcourt greatly improved and enlarged the mansion, and it afterwards passed into the hands of the Dukes of Portland.²

¹ The handsome offices and stables originally at the back of the house, beyond the garden, were designed by Ware. Archer was a "groom-porter of all His Majesty's houses in England and elsewhere." He was an architect of considerable merit, although St. John's Church, Westminster, which he designed, is hardly sufficient to prove this. Lady Cowper refers to him in her interesting *Diary*.

² The second Duke had married Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, heiress of Edward, second Earl of Oxford, who had succeeded to the estate on which Cavendish Square stood through his wife, the heiress of the Duke of Newcastle, who purchased the property, in 1708. If therefore a ninety-nine years' lease had been granted of Harcourt House in 1717, when the Square was laid out, this would expire in 1816, so that the property would then, in any case, have naturally reverted to the Duke of Portland as representing the original ground landlord.

From the fact that Lord Harcourt's name disappears from the Rate Books in 1738, that date may mark the year when the house passed into the hands of the Portland family (in which case it would have been under the second Duke), in the occupancy of which family it remained till the death of the eccentric fifth Duke, which occurred on December 6, 1879.

He it was who erected the great screen round the garden at the back, and who lived here in almost monastic seclusion, much to the wonderment of the curious, who were never tired of ventilating stories, mostly apocryphal, of his extraordinary manner of life, of which we have heard so much in a recent *cause célèbre*, the result of which has, it may be hoped, done much to blow away these flimsy rumours. The fact is that the house had always such a mysterious appearance that half the tales circulated may have gained additional credence from the fact of its forbidding exterior. Even in Lord Bingley's time, Ralph wrote that he considered it "one of the most singular pieces of architecture about town," and likened it rather to "a convent than the residence of a man of quality." Angelo, in his *Reminiscences*, on the other hand, thought it had "more the appearance of a Parisian mansion than any other house in London," on account of its high court walls and its *porte cochère*!

Thackeray took it, or at least some of its characteristics, as the original of his Gaunt House, and considering the doings that went on in Lord Steyne's residence, perhaps this was another reason why peaceful and wondering citizens should have pointed it out as a home of mystery.

In more recent years Harcourt House had a slight resuscitation of life given it when Lord Breadalbane lived there for a time; but two years ago the inevitable overtook it, and now a block of stupendous flats reigns in its stead.

MONMOUTH HOUSE

Just as Harcourt House was the chief feature of Cavendish Square, so Monmouth House once proudly dominated the formerly fashionable Soho Square, and although one or two other great houses were near by, such as Falconberg House and Carlisle House, afterwards to be closely identified with the notorious Mrs. Cornelys, Monmouth House was the only residence in the Square that can rightly be termed a palace.

It is said to have been designed by Wren,¹ and built in 1681, for the Duke of Monmouth, at the time when Soho Square was formed, and if it was not actually the first, was one of the first two houses to be erected

¹ Thornbury's *Old and New London*.

here. The Rate Books¹ show the Duke to have been in occupation at the beginning of the following year; but this was a period of storm and stress for the noble owner, who must have had very little enjoyment out of his new dwelling which, *immemor sepulcri*, like so many others, he had caused to be built; indeed he seems to have been relatively little here, as the numerous plots he was engaged in made his own home anything but a safe asylum; and we find him hiding in the houses of his friends, sometimes at Lord Anglesey's in Drury Lane, sometimes in Counsellor Thompson's in Essex Street; anon in lodgings in Holborn. As all the world knows, he was beheaded in 1685, so that a very few years of intermittent enjoyment of his palace was permitted him.

After the Duke's death, the property was purchased, presumably from his widow,² by Lord Bateman, who resided here for a time, but as the stream of fashion flowed westward, his lordship went with it, and the seemingly inevitable fate of all the fine old London houses overtook Monmouth House, a portion of which, in 1717, was converted into auction rooms. Many years later, notably in 1763, it had a brief return of prosperity, when it was rented by the Comte de Guerchy, then French Ambassador in London, and in the memoirs of the period references will be found to entertainments given here by His Excellency, who appears to have occupied the mansion for about ten years; while in a contemporary newspaper, for April 1764, we read that "a new chapel is erecting for the use of His Excellency the Count de Guerchy, the French Ambassador, in Queen Street, near Thrift (now Frith) Street, Soho"; this chapel being built on a portion of the gardens of Monmouth House.

When M. Grosley visited this country in 1765, he mentions the residence of the French Ambassador as among the four in London which he considers alone "*comparable aux grands hotels de Paris*," and as these included Bedford and Chesterfield Houses, as well as the house occupied by the Spanish Ambassador, we should, from this selection, have good evidence of the splendour of old Monmouth House, even if the front view of it given by J. T. Smith in his *Antiquities of London* were not an additional proof of the architectural excellence of its façade. Besides this, however, we are luckily able to rehabilitate certain features of the place by the help of Smith, who in his *Life of Nollekens* gives the following account of the building which, we must remember, he saw under

¹ As, curiously enough, Robert Carey, Earl of Monmouth, and his son the second and last Earl (he died in 1661), were both inhabitants of this quarter, it has been assumed that the name of Monmouth House was taken from their title, but this will, I think, hardly bear consideration. Their residence was, however, probably also known by their name.

² He had married, in 1663, Lady Anne Scott, daughter and heiress of Francis, second Earl of Buccleuch.

all the disadvantages of partial demolition. Here is what he has recorded about it: "Mr. Nollekens, on his way to the Roman Catholic Chapel, in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he was christened, stopped to show me the dilapidations of the Duke of Monmouth's house in Soho Square. It was on the south side, and occupied the site of the houses which now stand in Bateman's Buildings; and though the workmen were employed in pulling it down, we ventured to go in. The gate entrance was of massive ironwork supported by stone piers, surmounted by the crest of the owner of the house; and within the gates there was a spacious courtyard for carriages. The hall was ascended by steps. There were eight rooms on the ground floor; the principal one was a dining-room towards the south, the carved and gilt panels of which had contained whole-length pictures. At the corners of the ornamented ceiling which was of plaster, and over the chimney-piece, the Duke of Monmouth's arms were displayed.

"From a window we descended into a paved yard, surrounded by a red-brick wall with heavy stone copings, which was, to the best of my recollection, full twenty feet in height. The staircase was of oak, the steps very low, and the landing-places tessellated with woods of light and dark colours, similar to those now remaining on the staircase of Lord Russell's house, late Lowe's Hotel, Covent Garden, and in several rooms of the British Museum.

"As we ascended, I remember Mr. Nollekens noticing the busts of Seneca, Caracalla, Trajan, Adrian, and several others, upon ornamental brackets. The principal room on the first floor, which had not been disturbed by the workmen, was lined with blue satin, superbly decorated with pheasants and other birds in gold. The chimney-piece was richly ornamented with fruit and foliage, similar to the carvings which surrounded the altar of St. James's Church, Piccadilly, so beautifully executed by Grinling Gibbons. In the centre over this chimney-piece, within a wreath of oak leaves, there was a circular recess which evidently had been designed for the reception of a bust. The heads of the panels of the brown window shutters, which were very lofty, were gilt; and the piers between the windows, from stains upon the silk, had probably been filled with looking-glasses. The scaffolding, ladders, and numerous workmen rendered it too dangerous for us to go higher, or see more of this most interesting house. My father had, however, made a drawing of the external front of it, which I engraved for my first work, entitled *Antiquities of London*, which has been noticed by Mr. Pennant in his valuable and entertaining anecdotes of the Metropolis."¹

¹ *Life of Nollekens*, by J. T. Smith, edited by Mr. Edmund Gosse, 1895, pp. 53-55.

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The property on which Monmouth House stood subsequently belonged to the Dukes of Portland, and in the Crace collection is a plan, drawn by John White, in 1799, which shows the large extent of ground occupied by Monmouth House and its gardens which originally covered the area between Greek Street and Frith Street, and reached back as far as Queen Street.

When the Comte de Guerchy's tenancy expired, and the mansion was demolished in 1773, the ground on which it stood was let on building leases, and on part of it Bateman's Buildings¹ were erected, which, with the neighbouring Bateman Street, perpetuates the title of the second owner of Monmouth House; but there is nothing now to record the association of the mansion with its original unfortunate possessor.

ASHBURNHAM HOUSE

Unlike Monmouth House, of which every trace has long since disappeared, Ashburnham House was standing till within a few years ago (1897), but the site is now covered by the immense block of flats which has a frontage in Dover Street, Piccadilly, and occupies the whole of the south side of Hay Hill. The old mansion stood some way back from Dover Street, having a courtyard enclosed by railings in front of it; it was numbered 30 in the street, and was for many years the town house of the Earls of Ashburnham.

It would appear that when Dover Street was formed in 1686, Lord Dover,² the ground landlord, occupied a house on the east side of the thoroughfare; in 1700, however, the Rate Books show him to have removed to the west side, probably to a house erected by himself, which Macky calls "a very noble" one, on the site afterwards occupied by Ashburnham House. Lord Dover died in 1708, but his widow occupied the house till the end of 1726; shortly after which the following advertisement appeared in the *Daily Journal*, for January 6, 1726-7:—

"To be sold by auction on Wednesday the 1st of February, 1726-1727, the large Dwelling House of the Right Hon. the Countess of Dover deceased in Dover Street, St. James's; consisting of seven rooms on a floor, with closets, a large and beautiful staircase finely painted by Mr. Laguerre, with three coach houses, and stables for 10 horses, and all manner of conveniences for a great family."

Nothing appears to have been done during 1727, however, for in the

¹ In Horwood's plan, 1794, they are shown running down the centre of the site on which old Monmouth House stood.

² Henry Jermyn, second son of Thomas Jermyn, and nephew of Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, created a peer in 1685, and advanced to an earldom four years later.

Rate Books Lady Dover's name is marked through with a pen, indicating that the house was empty; but in 1728, it is omitted from the Rates altogether, which would tend to show that the house had been demolished; and as in 1729 the name of James Brudenel, Esq., appears, it seems almost certain that he had purchased Lady Dover's house, probably in 1727, and had erected a new mansion on its site; the building operations being completed in 1729. Brudenel was a member of the family ennobled by the earldom of Cardigan in 1661; and I trace him as residing in Dover Street till 1735; six years later the fourth Earl of Cardigan, who was created Duke of Montagu in 1766, is shown as occupying the same house, which he apparently retained till 1750, at which time he took the name and arms of Montagu, having married Lady Mary Montagu, daughter and co-heiress of John, second Duke of Montagu, and succeeded his father-in-law in the occupancy of old Montagu House, Whitehall, to be precise, in 1749.

Dover House, from 1750 to 1758, is then shown in the Rate Books to have been occupied by the fourth Earl of Carlisle, who died on September 4 of the latter year; but it is probable that he was merely renting it, as the present Lord Ashburnham tells me that the residence was purchased by his great-grandfather, the second Earl, whose name first appears in the Rate Books for 1759, from the Duke of Montagu, or as he then was Earl of Cardigan.

It would therefore appear that the mansion demolished in 1897 was that erected by James Brudenel, in 1729;¹ although it had obviously been much altered since that date, probably by Robert Adam, who is known to have designed the gateway and lodge-entrance in 1773, and to have made decorative additions to the interior, if he did not actually rebuild the place a second time. In the Crace collection is a plan of Ashburnham House which is described as "formerly Dover House."

The mansion remained the town-house of the Earls of Ashburnham till its destruction, but at various times it was let; notably for several years to the Russian Ambassadors, of whom Prince Lieven was the first to occupy it, and Pozzo di Borgo the last; while Lord Ashburnham informs me that he remembers it being given up by Baron Brunnow shortly before the outbreak of the Crimean War.²

During Prince Lieven's tenancy, the celebrated Princess Lieven held here her *salon*, whither resorted members both of the Government and

¹ I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. W. E. Bowen, who took much trouble to help me in verifying the data from the Rate Books given above.

² Greville speaks, in May 1853, of Brunnow "dreading above all things the possibility of his having to leave this country."

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of the Opposition, a characteristic that differentiated it from the assemblies at Holland House, or those presided over by Lady Hertford or Lady Jersey.

Unfortunately there is little to record about Ashburnham House, except that it possessed, in common with other great mansions in London, splendid and well-proportioned rooms, and was full of those fine internal decorations, such as elaborately moulded ceilings and cornices, and beautifully carved mantelpieces and over-doors, with which the eighteenth century loved to heighten the splendour of its more impressive dwellings.

The position formerly occupied by Ashburnham House deserves a word because of its historical interest in connection with Wyatt's rebellion. Hay Hill takes its name from the Aye Brook which ran near here through the gardens of Lansdowne House, and from which Brook Street is so named. When Sir Thomas Wyatt marched on London, in 1554, with the view of overturning the throne of Mary, he planted his cannon on the top of Hay Hill, probably on the very spot where Ashburnham House afterwards stood; and here, according to Machyn, a skirmish took place between his forces and "the queeyns men" when, adds the diarist, "he and ye captayns wher overcum, thanke be unto God." In accordance with the retributive justice of the period, Wyatt's head was, after his execution, hung "on the gallows at Hay Hill,"¹ which would appear to point to the previous existence of a "tree" here; unless one was specially erected for this purpose, which the use of the definite article does not seem to indicate.

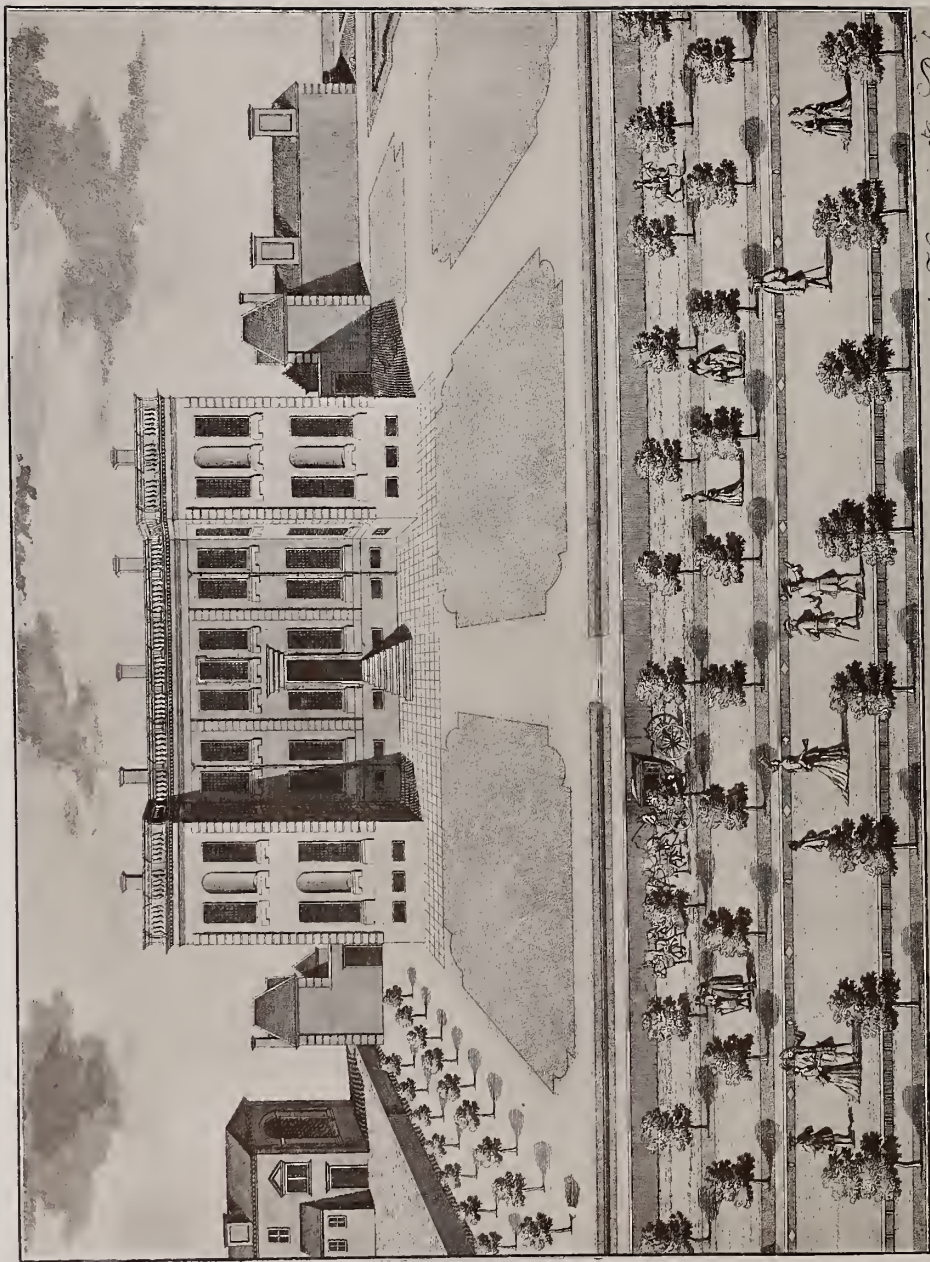
MARLBOROUGH HOUSE

We must now turn our attention to the half-dozen houses which, although still in existence, have passed from private ownership, and can therefore only be considered as private palaces in relation to their former occupants. The first of these is Marlborough House, which has for so long been identified with the reigning family, that for many people much of its early interest has become merged in the lustre shed on it by its more recent occupiers.

Marlborough House was erected during the years 1709 and 1710, for the great Duke of Marlborough, Queen Anne having leased the ground on which it stands to her friend the Duchess who, to mortify Vanbrugh, employed Wren to draw out plans for the residence.

By a plan of St. James's Park as it was at the Restoration the whole

¹ Stow and Machyn, the latter of whom adds, "whar dyd hang 3 men in chynes."



The South-West Prospect of his Grace's House in St. James's Park.
Engr'd by G. Kneller.

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, FROM THE MALL.

of the ground on which Marlborough House stands, with its gardens, appears to have been laid out in pleasure-grounds, there being a long low building at its north end, where the entrance gates are now.

Queen Anne had leased to the Duchess of Marlborough certain ground known as "the pheasantry," on which it was originally intended to build the house; but before anything was done a fresh arrangement was entered into, by which this lease was surrendered and a new one granted "of all that house, yards, gardens, curtilages, ground, and buildings, and other premises which were demised by the late King Charles the second in trust for Queen Catherine," and in addition "that piece of garden ground taken out of St. James's Park, then in the possession of Henry Boyle, one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State."¹

The ground is substantially the same in area as that now attached to Marlborough House; and the Duchess has herself left the following account of the transaction:—

"The next grant of which by my Lord Godolphin's means I obtained the promise from the Queen after the Queen Dowager's death was the ground in St. James's Park upon which my house stands. This has been valued by my enemies at £10,000, how justly let any one determine, who will consider that a certain rent is paid for it to the Exchequer, that the ground was at first but for fifty years, and that the building has cost between forty and fifty thousand pounds, of which the Queen has never paid one shilling, though many people have been made to believe otherwise."²

Among the Coxe MSS. there is "an account of what the grant of Marlborough House has cost the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough," in which occur some interesting details. Thus we find the cost of building of the house and making the garden amounted to "very near fifty thousand pounds";³ commenting on which, the Duchess adds, "That article seems almost incredible, but it is not really so extravagant as it appears, because it (the mansion) is the strongest and best house that

¹ Grant in Harleian MSS. dated June 10, 1709.

² See *An Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough*.

³ The following extract from the *Post Boy*, December 27, 1712, refers to the house:—

"Whereas a false, malicious and scandalous report hath been industriously spread, that in the building of his house near St. J., the surveyor made great advantages to himself by gratuities from the workmen: we whose names are underwritten having been employed in the said building, do hereby declare, &c., that in making contracts, &c. &c. neither the surveyor, nor his agents . . . ever had or received . . . from any of us, any gratuity, reward, &c. whatsoever. . . .

"Witness our hands this 27th Nov. 1712.

"JOHN CHURCHILL, Carpenter.
HENRY WISE, Gardener.
JOHN IRELAND, Glazier, &c."

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ever was built"; and we learn further from Her Grace that: "In yearly rents I pay to the Crown are five shillings; and £13. 15. 0 for the house; and £13. 15. 0 for the four little houses; the land-tax on the house is £60 a year."

From a perspective view of St. James's Palace by J. Maurer, we can see to some extent what Marlborough House looked like when finished; it differed from its present appearance in that it was without the upper storey, which was subsequently added by the third Duke, who also built some additional rooms on the ground floor.

Macky, who published his journey through England in the year of the first Duke's death, 1722, thus speaks of the house as it was at that time: "Marlborough House, the palace of the Duke of Marlborough," he writes, "is in every way answerable to the grandeur of its master. Its situation is more confined than that of the Duke of Buckingham's;¹ but the body of the house much nobler, more compact, and the apartments better disposed. It is situated at the west end of the King's garden² on the Park side, and fronts the Park, but with no other prospect but the view. Its court is very spacious and finely paved; the offices are large and on each side as you enter; the stairs mounting to the gate are very noble; and in the vestibule as you enter, are finely painted the Battles of Hochstet and (*sic*) Blenheim, with the taking Marshal Tallard prisoner."³ These paintings were the work of Laguerre and covered no less than 500 square yards of surface,⁴ and are dismissed by Walpole as "some things at Marlborough House."

At the north-east corner of the house is the foundation-stone, on which are cut these words: "Laid by her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough, May 24, and June 4, 1709," so that next year will see the bi-centenary of the palace.

It would seem that, at the accession of George I., the Duke of Marlborough, in order probably to further his interest with the new sovereign, offered his house to the Prince and Princess of Wales; and in the *Weekly Post* the circumstance is mentioned thus: "The Duke of Marlborough has presented his house to the Prince and Princess of Wales; and it is said a terrace walk will be erected to join the same to St. James's House; and that the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough are to have the late Earl of Ranelagh's house at Chelsea College." There is, however, no further record of this gift being made; indeed, it is not unlikely that

¹ Buckingham House, now Buckingham Palace.

² This was afterwards Carlton House Garden.

³ Vol. i. p. 127. Macky also notes that "there are abundance of fine pictures in this palace."

⁴ *London Past and Present*.

the perpetual quarrels between the King and the Heir-apparent would have alone been sufficient to make the residence of the latter so near St. James's anything but desirable ; and eager as Marlborough may have been to pay his court to the future sovereign, he may have regretted making an offer which may be supposed to have been little acceptable to the sovereign *in esse*.

Although there are magnificent rooms in the mansion, Wren's forte was not domestic architecture, and there is no doubt but that the convenience of the internal arrangements as affecting the relative positions of the reception-rooms and the offices, was sacrificed to the outward appearance of the house ; indeed a writer describing the rooms, in 1865, gives an amusing picture of the progress of provisions from the kitchen to the dining-room as taking this route : " First downstairs to the basement ; secondly, through the basement corridors ; thirdly, upstairs again by any one of the three equally awkward means ; and fourthly, so on to the dining room in a manner still as awkward as the rest." ¹

The Duke and Duchess continued to reside at Marlborough House until the death of the former, which occurred here in 1722 ; when, on August 6th, that magnificent funeral procession, " one of the most imposing that the Metropolis of England had ever witnessed," in which figured the car with its violet canopy, specially made for the purpose by the Duchess's orders, and which on a notable occasion she refused to lend to the Duchess of Buckingham, passed through a portion of the garden wall which had been demolished for the purpose. Shortly afterwards the Duchess, in bed as was her wont, received the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London, who came all the way from the City to thank her for the present of a fat buck !

Indeed, after the Duke's death this redoubtable lady, about whom and her notorious bad temper so much has been written and so many stories retailed, reigned like a queen in Marlborough House, saying and doing all manner of strange things. The tale of her eccentricities is endless. When the preparations for the marriage of the Princess Anne with the Prince of Orange were toward, a boarded gallery was put up close to the windows of Marlborough House, and was allowed to remain there an unconscionable time, whereupon the Duchess, eyeing it with indignation, was wont to remark, " I wonder how long my neighbour George will leave his orange chests here." But she had to put up with a more permanent inconvenience than this. The entrance to Marlborough House from Pall Mall was always, as it is to-day, awkward and insignificant, and the Duchess was anxious to purchase the houses on

¹ *The Gentleman's House*, by R. Kerr.

the ground to the east of it, in order that she might make a more fitting gateway, but Sir Robert Walpole getting wind of her intention, out of mere spite, bought the property in question, and still further blocked up the front of Marlborough House by erecting other buildings on the vacant ground. No wonder the angry Duchess drew the distinction that it was wrong to wish Sir Robert dead, but only common justice to wish him hanged! particularly when we remember that Walpole once again got the better of her when he found out that she was trying to marry her granddaughter Lady Diana Spencer to the Prince of Wales and had offered £10,000 as dowry, and effectually prevented the scheme from being carried through.

The Duchess has been called

“The wisest fool much time has ever made,”

and Vanbrugh, who had no reason to love her Grace, it must be confessed, speaks of her as that “wicked woman of Marlborough”; while Swift, who hated her with perhaps less reason, records her “sordid avarice, disdainful pride, and ungovernable rage”; but when all is said, she must have been a beautiful woman, and frequently a warm friend; and to her “clear apprehension and true judgment” no less an authority than Burnet bears witness.

Her death occurred at Marlborough House in her eighty-fifth year. She had been told that she must be blistered or she would die; but age could not wither her indomitable spirit: “I won’t be blistered and I won’t die,” she exclaimed in a paroxysm of anger; but Death is deaf as well as blind, and on October 18, 1744, the old fighter ceased from troubling.

I find a curious anecdote of old Duchess Sarah in De Saussure’s book on England. At the Coronation of George II. it appears that the procession in the Abbey was at one time brought to a full stop, whereupon “the Dowager-Duchess of Marlborough took a drum from a drummer, and seated herself on it. The crowd laughed and shouted at seeing the wife of the great and celebrated General Duke of Marlborough, more than seventy years of age, seated on a drum in her robes of state and in such a solemn procession.”¹

Four years after the Duchess’s death, certain old houses that had hitherto stood between Marlborough House and the Palace were removed, under the direction of John Vardy, the architect who helped to build Spencer House close by. At this time the second Duke of Marlborough, grand-nephew of the Duchess, resided here; and on his death,

¹ *A Foreign View of England.*

in 1758, he was succeeded in its occupancy by his son, the third Duke, who added to the building and made other improvements.¹ On his death, in 1817, the remainder of the lease of the property was purchased by the Crown, as a London residence for the Princess Charlotte on her marriage with Prince Leopold, but before the purchase was completed the Princess died; the Prince, however, resided here for several years, paying a rent of £3000 a year. Later it became the town residence of the Dowager Queen Adelaide, until her death in 1849; and in the following year it was settled on the Prince of Wales. As, however, at that time, he was too young to have a separate establishment, the mansion was granted temporarily to the then newly-formed Department of Science and Art, and under its auspices the Vernon Gallery, *inter alia*, was for a time housed within its walls. In 1861, the house was remodelled as a residence for the Heir-apparent; the stables being added two years later.

Marlborough House may thus be considered in the light of a Royal Palace for nearly the last hundred years of its existence, and as such has no proper right to be included, except in the summary way in which I have dealt with its later history, in these pages. If, however, in more recent days its fortunes have been indissolubly connected with His Majesty the King as well as with the present Prince of Wales, its earlier history is as closely identified with the great soldier who taught the doubtful battle where to rage, and with his imperious and beautiful Duchess.

SCHOMBERG HOUSE

A little to the east of the entrance to Marlborough House in Pall Mall stands a solitary fragment, the west wing, of the once splendid mansion known as Schomberg House. Amid the classic fronts of innumerable clubs which have borrowed their façades from half a hundred palaces, the remains of old Schomberg House look as much out of place as might a courtier of the time of William III. if seen strolling down Pall Mall to-day; for, indeed, this street of streets has been rebuilt out of all knowledge, and preserves so little of its former appearance that the ghosts of those who used to loiter along it would hardly know their way until they caught sight of the clock-tower of the palace hard by, which alone seems to defy time royally amidst the ever-changing kaleidoscope

¹ "This house with offices, yards, gardens, was granted by the Crown, 6th June 1785, to George, Duke of Marlborough, for 50 years, together with a piece of ground in Pall Mall, now the front court yard, for 31 years, which were valued at £600 per annum, fine £30; new rents £61. 5. 0. and £13. 15. 0."—Malcolm's *Londinum Redivivum*, vol. iv. p. 317.

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of architectural fashion. And just as those of the Augustan age will look in vain for an unmutilated Schomberg House, so shall we in a few years' time seek fruitlessly for the solid and dreary edifice which occupied the better part of its site. No longer does the activity of the War Office simmer in Pall Mall; no longer does Sidney Herbert muse, and turn his back upon it; for just as the original building gave way to its dreary successor, so will that upstart be one day supplanted by yet another club, before whose doors the panting motor will heave where once the stately sedan was solemnly set down.

It is curious how few who tread the streets raise their eyes to the upper stories of houses or shops, and this is perhaps accountable for the fact that when a landmark vanishes its outward semblance is so soon forgotten; but Schomberg House, or rather the fragment of it that still exists, compels attention from the unwonted nature of its architectural features; the eye thus attracted becomes conscious of the circular tablet which, after much wrestling with the dirt that habitually begrimes it, at length makes us aware that Gainsborough here breathed his last, and so the place has come to have for many an interest from the fact alone that here the great artist painted his imperishable portraits, played on his beloved fiddle, and in the last scene of all saw himself wafted to the celestial mansions in Vandyck's company. And there is little doubt but that this association makes for the chief glory of the place; but it has had a far earlier history: it has been connected with other great names, as we shall see.

Schomberg House, which, by-the-bye, is numbered 81 and 82 Pall Mall, preserves in its name the title of the illustrious first Duke of Schomberg who was killed at the Battle of the Boyne, and over whose death even the impassive William III. wept; but it was not he who built the place; the credit of this belongs to his third son, who, in 1693, succeeded to the dukedom on the death of his younger brother, the fifth son of the first Duke, who by a curious arrangement first inherited the title which never passed to the eldest son of the first Duke at all, although he was living even at the time of the third Duke's accession.

Before the erection of Schomberg House, its site had been occupied by a less imposing dwelling, which, according to Timbs, was built in 1650, and was described as "a fair mansion, enclosed with a garden abutting on Pall Mall, and near to Charing Cross," at a time when Pall Mall was planted with elm trees, and when the half-a-dozen houses then in existence on the south side of the street were surrounded "by large meadows, always green, in which the ladies walked in summer time." Ten years later, the house was occupied by, amongst others, Edward Griffin,

Treasurer of the Chamber, and by the Countess of Portland, probably the widow of the second Earl, a daughter of the Duke of Lennox.

The new house was erected on this spot about 1698, and Narcissus Luttrell thus refers to the circumstance, under date of November 5th of that year: "Portland House in the Pall Mall is rebuilt, and will be richly furnished for Duke Schomberg, General of the forces in England." From the same authority we learn that a grant of no less than £4000 a year had been made the Duke two years previously, being the interest on the £100,000 which had been given by Parliament to the first Duke, apparently for his lifetime only; so that he was in a condition to keep up a fine house.

The furnishing must have been completed expeditiously, for in January 1699, we hear of Schomberg entertaining here "in a splendid manner," the French Ambassador, the Duke of Ormonde, "and other persons of quality"; while on September 10, 1703, he gave a banquet here to the Portuguese and Prussian Ambassadors and others.

Later in the same year Schomberg House was like to have been destroyed, for a party of disbanded soldiers who thought they had a grudge against its owner as Commander-in-Chief, assembled before the mansion and would probably have succeeded in demolishing it but for the timely arrival of the military. The following entry in Luttrell's *Diary* for October 10th of this year, indirectly bears on this circumstance: "Yesterday one Murray, a disbanded trooper, was convicted at the quarter sessions for Westminster for speaking reflecting words on Duke Schomberg; his wife was also convicted for speaking seditious words against his majestie."

Among the interior decorations of Schomberg House were the paintings on the grand staircase, which were the work of Peter Berchett, who came to England about this time (he had previously paid a visit of a year's duration, in 1681), and was employed to paint the ceiling of Trinity College Chapel, Oxford, as well as the summer house at Ranelagh. William III. engaged him to decorate his newly-erected Palace at Loo, on which he was engaged fifteen months, after which he came a third time to this country, and died in Marylebone in 1720.

The Duke of Schomberg died in 1719, when Schomberg House passed into the possession of his daughter and co-heiress, Frederica, who had married four years previously the third Earl of Holderness, two years after whose death in 1722, she married Benjamin Mildmay, created Viscount Harwich and Earl Fitzwalter in 1730.

A propos of this lady a story is told which indicates that she had little feeling for the memory of her grandfather, the first Duke. His body

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was buried in Dublin Cathedral, and Swift, anxious that a monument should be erected to his memory there, wrote to Lady Holdernessee and asked her for fifty pounds towards the expenses, but no notice was taken of his appeal; whereupon the angry Dean erected a tablet at his own charge and took occasion, in the inscription, to reflect on the conduct of Lady Holdernessee; upon which Dagenfeldt (who had married Lady Holdernessee's sister Mary), at that time envoy from Prussia to the English court, complained of Swift's conduct, which brought the latter into disfavour at court.

Schomberg House is, or rather was—for the west wing that remains is but a fragment of the building—a very characteristic example of the architecture of the period; but who was responsible for its design is, unfortunately, not recorded. I am not disinclined to think, however, that Captain Winde, who was responsible for Buckingham House, as well as for Newcastle House, Lincoln's Inn Fields, may have had a hand in it.¹

Lord Holdernessee died in 1722, and his son apparently succeeded him in the possession of the place, probably after the death of his mother the Dowager Lady Holdernessee who, as we have seen, married *en second nocces* Earl Fitzwalter, for I find that the mansion was let by Lord Holdernessee to the Duke of Cumberland—"the Butcher"—in 1760, when, on the accession of his nephew George III., he was obliged to vacate St. James's Palace, and it was then known as Cumberland House, by which name it is shown in Horwood's map of London, dated 1796. The Duke probably lived here till his death in 1765, in which year it is known to have been sold, at the remarkably low figure of £5000, to John Astley the portrait-painter, who seems to have been rather indebted to good fortune than to genius for the success he achieved. He was a pupil of Hudson, and after this novitiate travelled in Italy; returning home, he settled in Dublin, where his handsome face and engaging manners, quite as much as any talent he may have possessed, enabled him to make a small fortune. He determined to set up as a fashionable portrait-painter in London, and on the way thither he became acquainted with the widow of Sir William Daniel, who was besides an heiress possessed of considerable estates in Cheshire; this lady, with her £5000 a year, he married, and henceforth painted rather for amusement than profit, and divided his time between a dilettante following of art and the existence of a beau of the period. The well-known story told of Astley must have

¹ It is amusing to read in Hare's *Walks in London* that the house was built by Meinhardt for the "great Duke of Schomberg." Meinhardt was the Christian name of the third Duke for whom the house was erected. The 'great Duke' was the first Duke, killed at the Boyne.

had its origin in his pre-nuptial days before fortune smiled upon him ; for it is said that once being one of a company at a country outing, he for long refused to take off his coat, as his companions had done, but at last the heat of the sun was too much for him, and he was compelled to pull off his outer garment, when, lo and behold ! the back of his shirt was seen to represent a waterfall ; he had wrapped himself, *faute de mieux*, in one of his unsold canvases. When Astley purchased Schomberg House he divided it into three portions, reserving for himself the main building, over the entrance of which he placed a medallion group of "Painting," which was his own work. On the top storey he reserved a suite of rooms for his own private use, and on the roof built a large studio which he termed his "country house." He died in 1787, and it was during his period of possession that, in 1780, the Gordon rioters threatened to demolish the building ; simply, one supposes, because of its being a landmark rather than from any particular antagonism on the part of the rioters to its owner.

In this memorable year Astley left Schomberg House, letting the portion he had occupied to that notorious quack Dr. Graham, who opened here what he called his Temple of Health, where he subjected his patients to the soothing influences of his "Celestial Bed," and where the goddess of health was personified by a beautiful woman named Prescott. Graham ornamented the front of Schomberg House with a statue of Hygeia and other emblematic advertisements, and although he charged two guineas a head entrance fee to his lecture on health, or perhaps because of the largeness of the sum, fashionable London crowded to his magnificently decorated rooms. Horace Walpole was, of course, a visitor, but he detected the empiricism of the worthy Doctor, for he tells Lady Ossory, on August 23, 1780, that "it is the most impudent puppet show of imposition I ever saw, and the mountebank himself the dullest of his profession."

When his absurdities ceased to attract in London, Graham tried them in various provincial towns, and after many adventures died in 1794, notwithstanding his assertion that he had discovered the Elixir of Life !¹

After Graham's departure Richard Cosway occupied the centre of the house, and here Mrs. Cosway also painted and gave her celebrated musical parties. From 1770 to 1780, Cosway was living in Berkeley Street, Piccadilly, and it was here that he first attracted the notice of the Prince of Wales, whose portrait he so often produced, so that when he took up his residence at Schomberg House, he was in the heyday of his fame ; he, however, only remained here five years, removing to Stratford Place in 1792.

¹ For an interesting account of Graham see Timbs's *Romance of London*.

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The portion of the house that had been occupied by Cosway was, after the termination of his tenancy, used by the so-called Polygraphic Society, where "wretched copies of good pictures," according to J. T. Smith, were exhibited; later it became the headquarters of Bryan the picture-dealer; anon Coxe the once famous auctioneer took it; and later still it was the bookshop of the celebrated Tom Payne, the Quaritch of the day, who came here in 1806, and was succeeded by Messrs. Payne and Foss; while, as if to add to its artistic associations, Jervas, the friend of Pope, and a portrait-painter of some merit, as well as Nathaniel Hone, who died in 1784, were numbered among former tenants of this portion of the once noble old house, as was also Robert Bowyer, miniature-painter to Queen Charlotte, who exhibited at Schomberg House his Historic Gallery, consisting of pictures and prints illustrating the annals of this country, which, in 1807, he disposed of by lottery, Parliament having passed an Act expressly authorising him to do so.

But a pre-eminent painter was to be associated with Schomberg House, in the person of the great Gainsborough, who rented the west wing of the mansion from Astley, in 1774, paying £300 a year for it. Here he lived and painted till his death in 1788, and here were produced some of those masterpieces which are to-day the glory of British art. Walpole specifically mentions his executing here "the large landscape in the style of Rubens, and by far the finest landscape ever painted in England, and equal to the great masters."

The ten years of Gainsborough's activity here were the most triumphant of his career. To mention merely the names of the great and beautiful who trod the stairs of Schomberg House, would be to recapitulate the titles of the most famous men and women of the day; from royalty downwards—and he painted all George III.'s large family more than once, and even, as has been said, made Queen Charlotte look picturesque—every one came here or to Sir Joshua's in Leicester Square, and not infrequently to both. These two remarkable men monopolised the art of portrait-painting; there were other competitors, but at what an immeasurable distance the picture-galleries of to-day attest.

Gainsborough once commenced a portrait of Sir Joshua here, but only one sitting was given before Reynolds had to go to Bath on account of the slight paralysis that had seized him; his next visit was to the death-bed of his great rival, who had several of his unfinished works brought into the room to show to Sir Joshua, flattering himself that he would live to finish them. But this was not to be; and in July 1788 he wrote and begged Reynolds to pay him a last visit. The scene has become

historic. "If any little jealousies had subsisted between us," says Sir Joshua, recounting the scene, "they were forgotten in those moments of sincerity; and he turned towards me as one who was engrossed in the same pursuits, and who deserved his good opinion by being sensible of his excellence." It was on this notable occasion that Gainsborough, looking fixedly at his brother artist, uttered those memorable last words: "We are all going to heaven, and Vandyck is of the company."

The east wing of Schomberg House, as well as the main building, had its commercial uses, for here, for a time, the business premises of Messrs. Dyde & Scribe, who were succeeded by Harding much patronised by George III. and his family, were established.

In 1850, when it was found necessary to enlarge the War Office, in those days called the Ordnance Office which occupied the sites of the former residences of the Dukes of York and Buckingham, the east wing of Schomberg House was pulled down for the purpose and replaced by one of those so-called classic buildings in which the period delighted.¹ Such a piece of vandalism would nowadays hardly be permitted by public opinion, one likes to think, but in those times it was probably considered an "improvement" to mutilate a fine building, which in spite of its internal divisions outwardly preserved its original appearance, and to erect in its place a heavy and meaningless specimen of architecture.

UXBRIDGE HOUSE

It is not a very far cry from Pall Mall to Burlington Gardens, and here stands a splendid specimen of later Georgian architecture at its best. It is true that it has passed from the private uses for which it was erected, but, notwithstanding this as well as the fact that some additions have been made to it, it preserves substantially its original appearance, and may well take its place among the great houses which alone keep up the memory of their former stateliness by retaining their essential features unmutilated.

Uxbridge House, now used as the Western Branch of the Bank of England, which I here indicate, stands on the site of an earlier residence known as Queensberry House, which Giacomo Leoni, a Venetian architect who settled in England where he died in 1746, designed, in 1726, for the second Duke of Queensberry. The site occupies a portion of that Ten Acres Field, the building development of which was begun about 1716, and which was part of the property of the Earl of Burlington,

¹ In later days the War Office occupied till quite recently the whole of Schomberg House.

from whose titles Burlington Street and Gardens, and Cork Street are named.¹ Queensberry House appears to have been one of the earliest residences erected on this spot, and its appearance can be still studied in Picart's view of it produced at the time of its completion. It was in the classic style, the front being decorated by six Ionic columns dividing the windows of the first and second floors, while on the top of the façade stood six life-size figures. Even Ralph only found fault with its situation as being "over against a dead wall (that of Burlington House gardens apparently), and in a lane unworthy of so grand a building." The critic, remarking that it was in the style of Inigo Jones, takes occasion to make the observation that "a beautiful imitation is of abundantly more value than a bad original; and he that could copy excellencies so well, could not want a great deal of his own."²

Here the Duke of Queensberry and his celebrated Duchess,³ Prior's "Kitty, Beautiful and Young," lived when in town, and here their *protege* Gay, the poet, passed much of his time, his health and comfort being attended to by the Duchess with almost maternal solicitude, and his worldly affairs looked after by the Duke. It was in Queensberry House that, after an illness of but three days' duration, he died on December 5, 1734, and from here his body was taken to Exeter Change, where it lay in state, until conveyed on December 23rd, to the Abbey where it rests beneath the sumptuous monument set up by his patron to his honour, and carved by the great Rysbraek.

The Duchess died in this house, where she had passed half a century of her long life. She was as eccentric in old age as she had been beautiful in her youth; and an example of her "manner" is given by Walpole in a well-known anecdote. Horace himself, Lord Lorne, and George Selwyn were at one of her balls here, in 1764, when, finding the dancing-room cold, the trio retired to an adjoining apartment where there was a fire. The act did not escape her Grace's notice, who, saying nothing, there and then sent for a carpenter and had the door taken off its hinges! Indifferent to public opinion, she never followed new fashions, but continued to dress in the mode of her early youth; and when, at St. James's under the very nose of the King, she solicited subscriptions for Gay's *Polly*, the sequel to *The Beggar's Opera* which had given such annoyance

¹ Burlington Street was called Nowell Street till 1733.

² *Critical Review of Public Buildings*, 1783, p. 195. In Britton and Pugin's *Public Buildings of London*, is an elevation and plan of Uxbridge House showing the large music-room incorporated in the building, which reminds us of the Duke of Queensberry's well-known love of that art.

³ Lady Catherine Hyde, daughter of Henry, Earl of Rochester, married the Duke of Queensberry in 1720, and died of a surfeit of strawberries, on July 17, 1777.

to royalty, and was in consequence requested to retire from court, she wrote George II. probably the most daringly impertinent letter that a subject ever addressed to a sovereign !

The Duke died a year after his eccentric Duchess, when Queensberry House passed into the possession of "old Q."; some years later, however, it was purchased by Henry (Bayley) Paget, who was created Earl of Uxbridge in 1784. For some reason the mansion did not please its new owner, who commissioned John Vardy to design a new house, which that architect did with the help of Joseph Bonomi so far as the front was concerned, and the present building was erected during the years 1790-2.

Lord Uxbridge died in 1812, and was succeeded by his son, the well-known soldier, "the first cavalry officer in the world," as he was called, who, according to Lord William Pitt Lennox, "in his splendid uniform, was the *beau ideal* of a dashing hussar." Lord Uxbridge, who, as is known, lost a leg at Waterloo, was created Marquis of Anglesey a few weeks after the battle had been fought, for his services there. He continued to live at Uxbridge House till his death here on April 29, 1854, sometime after which event the mansion was sold to the Directors of the Bank of England, who made some necessary additions to it, but happily preserved in the state rooms on the first floor their principal decorative features, including the beautiful carved marble chimney-pieces.

CAMBRIDGE HOUSE

Cambridge House, Piccadilly, about which I now want to say something, is not the largest of the many great houses in this thoroughfare ; it is not so architecturally imposing as No. 105, which Novosielski built for the notorious Lord Barrymore ; it probably cost but a tithe of what Hope House, at the south-east corner of Dover Street, with its wonderful carvings and panellings, must have done ; but it has been the home of a number of notable men ; and it has a political significance only less marked, because of lesser duration, than that attached to Devonshire House or Lansdowne House. Like Barrymore and Hope Houses, it has, however, for many years now been converted into a club, and in the Naval and Military, or, as it is commonly termed, the "In" and "Out" Club, its identity as the famous town residence of Lord Palmerston has been to some extent merged.

It was originally known as Egremont House, having been the residence of Charles Wyndham, second Earl Egremont, for whom it was probably erected during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Dodsley, who published his *Environs of London*, in 1761, speaks of

it as being, at that time, "the last house built in Piccadilly," indicating that it was then the most westerly mansion at this point; Dodsley's further remarks are as substantially true of the place to-day as they were when he wrote: "It is of stone," he says, "and tho' not much adorned, is elegant, and well situated for a town house, having a fine view over the Green Park, which would be still more extended if the houses on each side were set further back." It was erected on the site of one of the innumerable inns that at one time congregated together in this neighbourhood; but the architect's name has not come down to us, although I have sometimes thought that it might possibly have been designed by Sir William Chambers, who, in 1759, had published his treatise on "Civil Architecture," and who may have restrained his prentice hand to the unpretentious though dignified style that characterises Egremont House, before experience and success urged him to the more elaborate work he did at Somerset House.

The political importance of the mansion to some extent commenced with its first owner, for Lord Egremont, besides being the first Plenipotentiary nominated to take part in the proposed Congress of Augsburg, in 1761, became later in the same year, Secretary of State for the Southern department, in George Grenville's administration (in which office he succeeded William Pitt), a post he held till his death on August 21, 1763. Lord Egremont was a man of great wealth and influence, and the latter he exerted on behalf of the King's struggle against the oligarchy of the Whigs; and with the help of his friends of the Cocoa Tree Club, he seems to have done yeoman's service to the cause he espoused. On his death, his son, who succeeded him in the title, continued to reside at Egremont House. He interested himself rather in agricultural and scientific matters than politics, and so during the period of thirty years in which he made Egremont House his town residence, as Petworth was his country abode, it ceased from being a political centre. Mrs. Delany speaks of the third Earl as "a pretty man," Horace Walpole termed him a handsome one, and even Charles Greville calls him a "fine old fellow."

Lord Egremont died in 1837, but as Lord Cholmondeley is known to have been residing at Egremont House, from 1822 to 1829, it is probable that he purchased it in the former year. He is remembered as being Chamberlain to the Prince of Wales, in 1795, and Lord Steward of the Household from 1812 to 1821. He was created a Marquis in 1815, and received the Garter in 1822, the year in which he is first traced to Egremont House, the name of which he changed to that of Cholmondeley House, after his own title. He died in 1827, and was succeeded by his son, the second Marquis, who, after occupying the place for two years, disposed

of it to the Duke of Cambridge, who lived here, till his death, which took place in this house, on July 8, 1850. During the period of his Royal Highness's occupation the mansion was again renamed, and as Cambridge House it was henceforth known until it was acquired by the club which still occupies it. What might have been a tragic event once nearly happened here, while the Royal Duke was in possession, for it was when leaving the house, on one occasion, after a visit to the Duke, that Queen Victoria was assaulted by a madman, though happily without serious consequences.

In the year of the Duke's death, Lord Palmerston took the house, and here until his death at Brocket Hall in 1865, it was the headquarters of the Whigs. Five years after he had made Cambridge House his London residence, he became Prime Minister, which office he held, with one break when Lord Derby was Premier from 1858-1859, continuously till his death; so that the political significance of Cambridge House during these ten years is particularly marked.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the frequent and splendid entertainments given here, together with the charm and tact of Lady Palmerston, did more than can be readily estimated to keep the party together, and to extend and strengthen the popularity of its leader, "the frolicsome statesman, the man of the day," as Locker-Lampson calls him. The memoirs and letters of the period are full of references to both these aids to the enhancement of "Pam's" glory and reputation, but notice of Cambridge House is here too slight to permit me to recapitulate any of them, which, besides, my readers would probably find unnecessary, so frequent and well-known are they.

On Lord Palmerston's death, his body was carried to the Abbey from Cambridge House, the procession forming one of the most impressive of the many pageants that have passed, at one time or another, through Piccadilly.

After this period of the mansion's prosperity and fame had closed, there was a suggestion that it should be demolished and a Roman Catholic cathedral built on its site; but luckily other counsels prevailed, and although, in its metamorphosis into a club-house, it has lost something of its original character, it remains, so far as its exterior is concerned, substantially as it has always been;¹ and if, as I have heard it rumoured, the ground landlord at the near expiration of the club's lease, comes himself to dwell in it, it may probably have a further long life as one of the lesser private palaces of the West End.

¹ An addition was made by the club by the formation of a low west wing at right angles to the main structure.

MELBOURNE HOUSE, NOW THE ALBANY

Just as Cambridge House has become identified with club life in the ordinary acceptation of the term, so the great house now known as the 'Albany' has come to be regarded as a sort of Club Lodging House for Private Gentlemen of a kind absolutely *sui generis*. So long, indeed, has it flourished under these conditions, that not within the memory of any one, has it been anything else, and just before its conversion to these uses, it was for a short time the residence of a Royal Duke; but during its earlier days it could be properly considered a private palace, and as such must not be omitted from these pages. Like many another great mansion it had a precursor in this spot, which in turn was preceded by three separate houses; of these the centre one was occupied at one time by Lady Stanhope, and afterwards by the Countess of Denbigh.¹ The Countess Stanhope, daughter of Thomas Pitt, Esq., was the wife of the first Earl, who died in 1721, and as she outlived him just two years, it may probably have been during this period of her widowhood that she resided here. The Countess of Denbigh was presumably the wife of the fifth Earl; she was Dutch by birth, being the daughter of Peter de Jonge, of Utrecht. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu refers to her somewhat disparagingly in a letter to Lady Mar, and from what she says, it is not improbable that Lady Denbigh lived separately from her lord; in a subsequent letter Lady Mary again mentions her and her doings thus: "I had almost forgot our dear and amiable cousin Lady Denbigh, who has blazed out all the winter; she has brought with her from Paris cart-loads of riband, surprising fashions, and complexion of the last edition, which naturally attracts all the she and he fools in London, and accordingly she is surrounded by a little court of both, and keeps a Sunday assembly to show she has learned to play at cards on that day."

If I am right in identifying the occupier of the centre house with this Lady Denbigh, it was in all probability here that she in turn amused and shocked London.²

The house on the west side was, so early as 1675, the residence of Sir Thomas Clarges, and was then described as being "near Burlington House above Piccadilly." This Sir Thomas, who died in 1695 and left £5000 a year to his son Sir Walter, was the brother-in-law of the Duke

¹ Wheatley's *Round About Piccadilly*, to which I am indebted for much of the information regarding "Albany."

² Without any actual data, I may be wrong; and the Lady Denbigh who resided here may have been the widow of the fourth Earl who died in 1717. She was Hester, daughter of Sir Basil Firebrass, Bt.

of Albemarle, who had in this very year purchased Clarendon House close by. The Clarges family owned property on the north of Piccadilly, and Clarges Street perpetuates its name. At one time a lease of it had been granted to Mr. Neale, who built the Seven Dials and introduced lotteries into this country;¹ but he not fulfilling certain stipulations, Sir Walter Clarges recovered the lease and developed the property himself. A later Sir Thomas Clarges, who died in 1759, was the friend of Swift, and married Barbara, the youngest daughter of John Berkeley, fourth Lord Fitzhardinge.

In 1715 the house I am speaking of was in the occupation of Sir John Clarges; but seven years earlier it had been let for a term to the Venetian Ambassador, probably Signor Bianchi, who filled that post in 1710, and whose coach, "the most monstrous, huge, fine, rich gilt thing," Swift mentions in one of his letters to Stella. About this time Hatton² calls the place "a stately new building."

The house next to this on the east side was the residence of the third Earl of Sunderland. It does not appear when he first came to reside here, but an advertisement in the *Tatler* confirms his residence here as early as January 1710. In course of time Lord Sunderland purchased the other two houses, and joined them to his own, making a splendid, if not uniformly architectural, mansion for himself. He was the great bibliophile who collected the famous Sunderland Library, which having passed to the Marlborough family, was dispersed about a quarter of a century ago, and in addition to the transformation of three residences into one, he built a fine room here for the reception of his treasures. Macky, in 1714, speaks of the "Palace of the Earl of Sunderland where," he says, "you will see the finest private library in Europe, and which surpasses many of the public ones"; while in a book entitled *The History of the Present State of the British Islands*, published in 1743,³ is the following account of Lord Sunderland's House as thus altered and enlarged: "Next to Burlington House is the Earl of Sunderland's⁴ with a high wall likewise before it, which hides it from the street, and tho' it be inferior to the former in many other respects, yet the library is look'd upon as one of the completest in England, whether we regard the beauty of the building, or the books that fill it. This edifice is an hundred and fifty foot in length, divided into five apartments, having an upper and a lower range of windows and galleries that go round the whole for the conveniency of taking down the books. It was collected chiefly by the

¹ See Evelyn's *Diary*, October 5, 1694.

² *New View of London*.

³ Quoted in *Round About Piccadilly*.

⁴ He died in 1722, and his son, the fourth Earl, in 1729.

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late Lord Sunderland, who left no place unsearched to replenish it with the most valuable books, and among the rest here is a greater variety of editions of the classicks than is to be met with in any other library."

The fifth Earl of Sunderland, brother of the fourth Earl, succeeded to the Dukedom of Marlborough in 1733, when certain country estates together with Sunderland House passed to the Hon. James Spencer, a brother of the new Duke, and the father of the John Spencer who became first Earl Spencer in 1765.¹

Many years later we find the house in the possession of Henry, first Lord Holland, who, however, sold it, in 1770, to the first Lord Melbourne, who had been elevated to that title the same year, and was probably anxious to have a town house suitable to his newly acquired dignity, and a fitting home for his beautiful wife whom he had married in the previous year, and of whom, Lady Sarah Lennox, in a letter to Lady Susan O'Brien, says: "She is liked by everybody high and low and of all denominations, which I don't wonder at, for she is pleasing, sensible, and desirous of pleasing, I hear, which must receive admiration."

In order to make the place still more imposing, Lord Melbourne pulled down the old mansion, and erected the present house from designs by Sir William Chambers. He seems, however, to have preserved the wall facing Piccadilly, for Ralph mentions it as being only less objectionable than that in front of Burlington House, because it happened to be smaller; he also criticises the pediment surmounting the gateway as "heavy," and the mansion itself he dismisses as deserving "neither censure nor praise"; which negative criticism may perhaps, from such a writer as Ralph, be considered as fairly favourable.

The interior of the new house was elaborately decorated, and we hear of the ball-room being painted by Cipriani; while Wheatley and Rebecca were employed to embellish other apartments.

Wheatley was a young man of about twenty-five when he was employed on this work, and a little later he is known to have assisted in painting the ceiling at Lord Melbourne's country seat, Broomfield Hall; but in later life he confined himself to those delightful *genre* scenes and portraits for which he is celebrated.

Rebecca is little known, although Mrs. Papendiek calls him "celebrated" in 1790, when he was employed in decorating the border of the canopy in the throne-room at Windsor, a work which George III. was constantly watching, we are told. Rebecca seems to have had an extraordinary facility for imitating inanimate objects; thus he once drew a full-length portrait of Horn the musician standing in the music-room at

¹ See *Mrs. Delany's Autobiography*.

Windsor. The King entering, and thinking it was the actual man, bade him sit down; another time Horn appeared to be standing in every one's way, and an equerry asked him to move, when Rebecca darted forward and removed the figure he had made; and still more extraordinary, on one occasion the King entered a room and saw, as he thought, a live coal burning on the hearthrug, on which he called for Harris, the major-domo of Windsor, and exclaimed, "I have so often told you to be more careful of the fires," whereupon Harris ran forward and picked up the object and threw it into the fire; when it was discovered to be another of Rebecca's wonderful tricks.

But this has carried us far from Melbourne House, which in 1791, Lord Melbourne exchanged with the Duke of York for York, formerly Dover House, afterwards known as Melbourne House, in Whitehall. In the Office of Woods, under date of November 1792, is the following entry, which refers to the transaction:—

"By an assignment of this date, after mentioning that Lord Melbourne was possessed of a freehold mansion in Piccadilly, lately called Melbourne, but then called York House, of which possession was given H.R.H. in December 1791, in pursuance of an agreement for an exchange of the leasehold house, lately called York House, but then called Melbourne House, and the building lately used as the Lottery House for the said freehold house, and that a money payment to equalise the exchange had been made by H.R.H., the premises comprised in the leases above were assigned to Peniston, Viscount Melbourne, for the remainder of the term for which they were held."¹

The Duke of York, who thus became possessed of the mansion, and after whom it was called York House, was the second son of George III. He apparently resided here, until he took a small house in Audley Square, South Audley Street, during the progress of the building of Stafford House, which he was renting at the time of his death, in 1827. It was on the advice, it is said, of his friend the Duchess of Rutland, in whose house in Arlington Street, by-the-bye, he actually died, that he determined to erect the immense pile now known as Stafford House, which he never lived to inhabit. When he vacated what was then York House, Piccadilly, the mansion was converted into sets of chambers,² and the name "Albany" given it from the Duke's second title. The gardens were built over to afford further accommodation, and that curious covered way, giving access to them from Vigo Street, formed.

¹ Quoted in *The Old Palace of Whitehall*, by the Rev. Canon Sheppard.

² In the Crace collection is a plan for dividing "Albany," and building additional blocks at the back. On this plan the house is stated to have been "lately occupied by H.R.H. the Duke of York."

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In Horwood's Plan, dated 1809, the house is called York House, and the buildings behind, "The Albany"; by which it would seem that the name was not at once applied to the whole place; in which case the Duke must have given it up long before he commenced Stafford House.

I need not enter particularly into the history of the house since it thus passed from its career as a private palace; but I may remind the reader that among the notable men who have resided in these chambers were Byron and Macaulay; George Canning and Lord Glenelg; Sir Robert Smirke and Sir William Gell; "Monk Lewis" and the much-travelled Lord Valentia; Lord Lytton and Henry Luttrell.

The place is to-day as monastic as it was when Lord Macaulay wrote here his great history, or when Lord Lytton wooed a very substantial "solitude" in one of its chambers.

HERTFORD HOUSE

Hertford, or as it was originally called, Manchester House, is to-day known of all London; it has become almost as much as the National Gallery, the Mecca of art-lovers. When we think of it, we conjure up in our minds a fairy palace filled not only with the wonders of French decorative work, but with a collection of armour, unrivalled in this country, and an assemblage of pictures to equal which we must go to Stafford House or Bridgewater House, and which in importance surpasses that in the royal palace itself. By a splendid benefaction, that marvellous aggregation of beautiful objects is now the property of the country, and may be seen by all and sundry; but it is probable that those who gaze and wonder at the masterpieces in a dozen arts assembled within these walls, give little thought to the history of the great mansion in which they find such a fitting home. I want here to say a few words about the house itself and its past owners; but it is, here, outside my province to deal with it as the superb museum it has become.

The site of Hertford House and Manchester Square was in the days of Charles II. known as "Maribone Gardens"; in the reign of Queen Anne, however, a project was mooted for forming a "quadrate" on this spot; but nothing was done till the year 1770, when the subject was reopened and plans passed in pursuance of such a scheme. One of the first to obtain a ground lease,¹ was George Montagu, fourth Duke of Manchester, who took practically the whole of the ground on the north side of what is now Manchester Square, while certain builders, such as the Adam brothers, Dalrymple, and others took leases of various portions.

¹ The property is on the Portman estate.

In 1776 the Duke commenced the erection of his fine mansion; and when the Square was sufficiently advanced to receive a name, that name was taken from the title of the nobleman whose residence was such a dominating note in its development.

The death of the Duke synchronised with the completion of the Square, in 1788, and Manchester House was thereupon purchased by the Spanish Government for the purpose of an Embassy in London, and in the *Court Guide* for 1795, the name of the Marquis del Campo is given as the then resident Ambassador. In order that there should be a Roman Catholic place of worship conveniently situated for the use of the Ambassador and his entourage, a piece of ground was acquired in what is now Spanish Place, at the north-east corner of the Square, and Bonomi was employed to design the chapel which was erected there.

In what year the Spanish Government vacated the house is not quite clear, but as Lord Palmerston, then looking out for a residence in London, speaks of it in a letter of 1808, as then being available, it was obviously before that date that the Embassy was removed. Lord Palmerston did not take the place, for, although he considered it "a nice house," he also thought it "sadly out of the way."

But it did not remain long untenanted, for soon after, the second Marquis of Hertford purchased it. He, as every one knows, was a close friend of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., and here the First Gentleman of Europe, as he has been facetiously termed, was a constant visitor; but these calls were not always paid to the master of the house; it was the Marchioness who so constantly caused "the old yellow chariot," in which the Prince paid his incognito visits, to rumble over the stones between Carlton House and Manchester Square. "The Prince," says Romilly, "does not pass a day without visiting Lady Hertford"; indeed so notorious did these calls on "the lovely Marchesa," as Moore terms her, become, that a scurrilous print once inserted in its columns the following advertisement: "Lost, between Pall Mall and Manchester Square, his Royal Highness the Prince Regent." Sometimes these visits were not of quite so *intime* a nature, and congenial spirits were invited to meet and amuse the Prince; never, perhaps, was one of these occasions so successful as that at which Theodore Hook was present, when he so delighted the Heir-apparent with his wit and remarkable feats of improvisation, that at the end of the evening, the Prince put his hand familiarly on his shoulder and exclaimed, "Mr. Hook, I must see and hear you again."

On the death of the second Marquis, in 1822, Hertford House, as it was now called, passed to his successor, the third Marquis, whose wife

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was that Maria Fagniani, about whose paternity George Selwyn and "Old Q." were always disagreeing.

This was the peer who has become immortal as the "Lord Steyne" of *Vanity Fair*; but although in his vices he may have to some extent resembled that redoubtable old rake, he had a saving grace, in his love and knowledge of art. As we know, he lived much abroad, and in his wanderings he made magnificent additions to the nucleus of a collection already gathered together in Hertford House. The moment for the acquisition of such treasures, especially in Paris, where relics of a departed *régime* were often to be picked up for a mere song, was most propitious, and Hertford House gradually became crowded with rare and beautiful objects of all sorts. In 1842, the third Marquis died, not here but at old Dorchester House in Park Lane, and his son the fourth Marquis threw himself with still greater ardour into the work of collecting pictures and furniture and *bric-à-brac*. His agents scoured Europe; no amount of trouble was spared, no sum of money was regarded, if some fine canvas, or rare piece of porcelain or furniture, was to be had. Opposition seemed hopeless against a man whose determination to secure a treasure was only equalled by the wealth that enabled him to do it. For nearly thirty years he dominated the sale-rooms of every capital of Europe, and in these his reputation was so firmly established that adversaries ceased to contend in hopeless struggles, and in consequence there is no doubt that he secured bargains which he might never otherwise have done. He was the Napoleon of collectors, but unlike Napoleon, directly the victory was won, he apparently ceased to care for the spoils, and his houses in London—Hertford House, Manchester Square; Hertford House (now the Isthmian Club), Piccadilly; and St. Dunstan's Lodge, Regent's Park, where he hung that wonderful clock from St. Dunstan's Church which he had cried for as a child and secured as a man—were crowded with his innumerable purchases; while he in his beloved retirement in Paris at his apartments near the Rue Lafitte, or in his splendid toy-house, Bagatelle, in the Bois de Boulogne, issued his mandates to breathless agents, or received the innumerable dealers who brought him only of their best. His life was like a realisation of one of Balzac's extravagant dreams; had the great writer possessed the means he might have been just such a collector; as it was, the author of *Le Cousin Pons*, scribbled on his bare walls the names of the masterpieces he never obtained, while Lord Hertford at Bagatelle hung up Reynolds's "Mrs. Robinson" by his bedstead, and dressed by the light of Greuze's "Sophie Arnould."

Lord Hertford died unmarried, in 1870, and left all his personal

wealth and unentailed property to his devoted friend and lieutenant, Mr. (afterwards Sir Richard) Wallace. One of the first things the legatee did was to save that portion of the marvellous collection which was stored in Paris, from the hands of the vandals of the Commune, by sending it off to England, although he himself, with a splendid heroism, remained in Paris and there earned by self-sacrifice and generosity, that name for philanthropy by which, as "Monsieur Richard," he was affectionately known.

For a time the Wallace Collection, as the accumulations of the two Marquises and Sir Richard himself, who was chiefly responsible for the armour, were now called, was exhibited in the Bethnal Green Museum, but by 1875, vast alterations and additions had been made to Hertford House with a view to accommodating the whole *en masse*.

Some years before his death, Sir Richard had made overtures to the Government with a view to leaving the whole of his artistic possessions to the country; the offer was met in the characteristic fashion of English Governments (Mr. Standish and Sir Henry Tate were treated in a very similar manner), when such magnificent offers have been made to them, and trivial and vexatious conditions were attached to acceptance, as if it was an act of condescension and kindness to accept what no Government could have procured for itself. A less public-spirited man than Sir Richard would have left the collection to a nation which could better have appreciated such a gift, as Mr. Standish did, and as it is a wonder Sir Henry Tate did not; but in spite of all the haggling of Treasury officials, better counsels prevailed, and on Lady Wallace's death it was found that Sir Richard had empowered her to bequeath the Wallace Collection to the country.

I need not insist on its value; none could probably say what that is; we talk of millions, but no number of millions could buy the contents of Hertford House; it cannot be compared, because certainly in this country there is nothing comparable to it. But its importance can be guessed at, for it exactly fills that *lacuna* in our national possessions which was always hitherto a matter of regret. The examples of French art in the National Gallery are insignificant in number, and often poor in quality; our public collection of French furniture and *bric-à-brac* was practically confined to the splendid but, in comparison with that at Hertford House, small, Jones collection; we had no representative assemblage of armour except that in the Tower; and the finest Sèvres china is in royal palaces or private houses; in Hertford House, we have all these gaps not only filled, but filled in such a way as to be the envy and despair of other countries.

NEWCASTLE HOUSE

Before Henry Jermyn commenced the development of his property between Piccadilly and Pall Mall of which St. James's Square formed the key-stone, and thus inaugurated the establishment of the West End as a fashionable dwelling-place, Lincoln's Inn Fields was one of the favourite residential spots in London; and even for many years after much of the fashion of the day had emigrated towards the west, there were many noble families to be found within it; while it is not improbable that had Inigo Jones's great plan of rebuilding the whole square been carried into effect, the exodus from this quarter might have been still longer retarded. As it is, such important people as the Earls of Bristol, Sandwich, and Lindsay; the Dowager-Countess of Middlesex, and the "proud" Duke of Somerset, and Sir Richard and Lady Fanshawe, are numbered among its past inhabitants; and for a time it was the recognised home of many of the Lord Chancellors, among whom Lord Cowper, and Simon, Lord Harcourt, Lords Northington and Macclesfield, may be named; while such men as Lords Ashburton, Grantley, and Kenyon, and Sir William Blackstone, anticipated by their residence here the legal aspect which has since almost entirely overtaken "the Fields." Many of the fine old houses that were once the private residences of noble owners still survive, in some cases mutilated as to their exteriors, and in practically all, divided and subdivided within beyond all knowledge.

Of these the largest and, in many respects the most important, is the great house at the north-west corner, now numbered 66, Lincoln's Inn Fields, but in the days of its earlier prosperity known first as Powis, and afterwards as Newcastle house.

It was erected in 1686, by William Herbert, created Earl of Powis in 1674, who was raised to the marquise the year after the house was built. The architect employed was that Captain William Winde, a pupil of Balthazar Gerbier, who addressed one of the numerous dedications of his *Counsel and Advice to all Builders*,¹ to his scholar. The Herbert family possessed an earlier house on the same site, which was burnt to the ground in 1684, the inmates barely escaping with their lives; and the private Act of Parliament for the erection of the new house is entitled "An Act for rebuilding the Earl of Powis's House in Lincoln's Inn Fields, lately demolished by fire." Luttrell thus refers to the destruction of the mansion, on November 26th: "About five in the morning broke out a fire in the house of the Earl of Powis in Great Lincoln's Inn Fields,

¹ Published in London in 1663.

which in a very little time consumed that house, the family hardly saving themselves from being burnt, but lost all their things."

Lord Powis enjoyed his new possession but a short time, for on the accession of William III. it was forfeited to the Crown, its master having been one of the few faithful adherents of James II., and one of those who followed him into exile.¹

On his departure from England, Lord Powis left his mansion exposed to the attacks of the anti-popery mobs which scoured the streets seeking what Roman Catholic property they might destroy. On the 11th December 1688, they gutted the popish chapel in Lincoln's Inn Fields, "pulling down all the wainscot, pictures, books, &c.," says Luttrell; and on the following night, the same authority tells us, "they would have plundered and demolished the houses of several papists, as Lord Powys, &c., if they had not been prevented by the train'd bands which were out," although in the *English Courant* for the same month, a somewhat different reason is given to account for the preservation of the mansion, thus: "Then they (the mob) went to the Lord Powis' great house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, wherein was a guard, and a bill upon the door—'This house is appointed for the Lord Delamere's quarters,' and some of the company crying, 'Let it alone, the Lord Powis was against the Bishops going to the Tower,' they offered no violence to it."²

Having passed by forfeiture to the Crown, Powis House was appointed as a residence for the Lord Chancellor during his term of office, and in this capacity, Lord Somers occupied it in February 1697, and remained here till September 1700. In the previous May he "offered Powis House to the Lord Keeper, who accepted thereof, and designs to live there and hear cases,"³ and on September 30th he sent the key of the mansion to the Lord Keeper, who moved into it on the following 3rd of October.

The Lord Keeper here mentioned was Sir Nathan Wright, and Pennant states that there was a report that the Government contemplated purchasing Powis House and settling it as an official residence on the Keeper of the Great Seal for the time being; this scheme was not, however, carried out, and John Holles, first Duke of Newcastle of the Holles branch, became its owner in May 1705, giving to the second Lord Powis, who had succeeded his father, £7000 for the place. At this time Sir Nathan Wright was still in possession, but arrangements had evidently been made for his giving it up, as we know that the Duke bought it for his own use, and Luttrell further informs us that he "designs to keep the office of the privy seal,"⁴ here as well.

¹ He died at St. Germain, in 1696.

³ Narcissus Luttrell's *Diary*.

² Quoted in *London Past and Present*.

⁴ *Diary*, May 8, 1705.

The Duke's possession of the house, which was now known as Newcastle House, was a comparatively short one, for he died in 1711, and as he left no direct heir, the title, and estates including Newcastle House, passed to his nephew, Thomas Pelham-Holles, son of Thomas, first Lord Pelham, who married six years after his accession to the title, Lady Henrietta, daughter of Francis, second Earl of Godolphin.

This Duke, besides holding a number of important offices under George I., was First Lord of the Treasury as well as Lord Privy Seal, under his successor, and is a well-known figure in the political annals of these two reigns, and at Newcastle House, which about this time De Saussure speaks of as particularly magnificent, he was wont to receive the crowds of friends and dependants who paid their court to him. "His levées were his pleasure and his triumph," writes an authority, "he loved to have them crowded, and consequently they were so. There he generally made people of business wait two or three hours in the ante-chamber, while he trifled away that time with some insignificant favourite in his closet. When at last he came into his levée-room, he accosted, hugged, embraced, and promised everybody, with a seeming cordiality, but at the same time with an illiberal and degrading familiarity."

The character of this extraordinary man has been often drawn. Walpole and Smollett and Macaulay have all handed down portraits which essentially resemble one another, of this eccentric, exceedingly ignorant, but at the same time, in some things, curiously astute and successful nobleman. "All that the art of the satirist does for other men, nature had done for him. . . . He was a living, moving, talking caricature. His gait was a shuffling trot; his utterance a rapid stutter; he was always in a hurry; he was never in time; he abounded in fulsome caresses and in hysterical tears. . . . He was eaten up by ambition. . . . He was greedy after power with a greediness all his own. . . . All the able men of his time ridiculed him as a dunce, a driveller, a child who never knew his own mind for an hour together; and he overreached them all round." This is a sort of patchwork of Macaulay's estimate, and if we distrust Macaulay's partiality on occasion, we must remember that in this instance his verdict is confirmed by the judgments of contemporaries.

In 1718, the year in which the Duke was made a Knight of the Garter, a large crowd made a bonfire before Newcastle House, and flung burning faggots at the windows, "whereupon," we are told, "several gentlemen and the Duke's servants came out with drawn swords, and wounded several of the mob."

Another nuisance to his Grace and his household were the perpetual visits of the "long Sir Thomas Robinson," on whom Lord Chester-

field made a well-known epigram, and who was continually calling at Newcastle House, with the hope of seeing its master. When this was denied him, he always desired to be allowed to go into the Hall and look at the clock, or play with the pet monkey that was kept there; hoping by such methods to intercept the Duke. At length the servants, grown tired of his importunities, resolved to put an end to his visits, so when next time Sir Thomas appeared and asked for the Duke, he received the following pregnant reply: "Sir, his Grace has gone out, the clock has stopped, and the monkey is dead."

This story is to be found in that storehouse of amusing tales, *The Century of Anecdote*, by Timbs, who took it from Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*; in the same book Timbs tells how it was at Newcastle House that the old custom of giving vails (we now call them tips) to servants received its death-blow. It was then customary for the servants to wait in the Hall and to receive gratuities from departing guests. On one such occasion, Sir Timothy Waldo, on his way from the ducal table, gave the cook five shillings, who immediately returned it, saying, "Sir, I do not take silver." "Don't you, indeed?" replied Sir Timothy, pocketing the crown; "and I don't give gold."

The Duke of Newcastle died in 1768, when the title passed to Henry Pelham-Clinton, who succeeded as second Duke, but there is no evidence that he occupied Newcastle House, which by this time had become somewhat *démodé*. During the early years of the nineteenth century it was certainly unoccupied; and its career as a private palace was for ever over.

In 1827, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge bought the freehold, and was established here for just fifty years, when it removed to its new premises in Northumberland Avenue. About 1879, Newcastle House was divided, one half being occupied by Messrs. Farrer, and the other by Messrs. Ingram, Harrison & Co.; more recently, on the lamentable failure of the latter firm, the north portion of the house was left unoccupied; but a year or so ago, Messrs. Farrer acquired it, and once again, under their *ægis*, the old house, although necessarily much divided inside, has regained its former outward appearance of a single mansion.

As may be seen in old prints of the residence, the covered archway in Great Queen Street, was formerly within the courtyard of the house, which enabled the latter to be reached from the offices at the back of the building, without the necessity of passing through the Hall. The stables belonging to Newcastle House were on the opposite side of Great Queen Street; and there was once a gateway into that thoroughfare from the mansion itself.

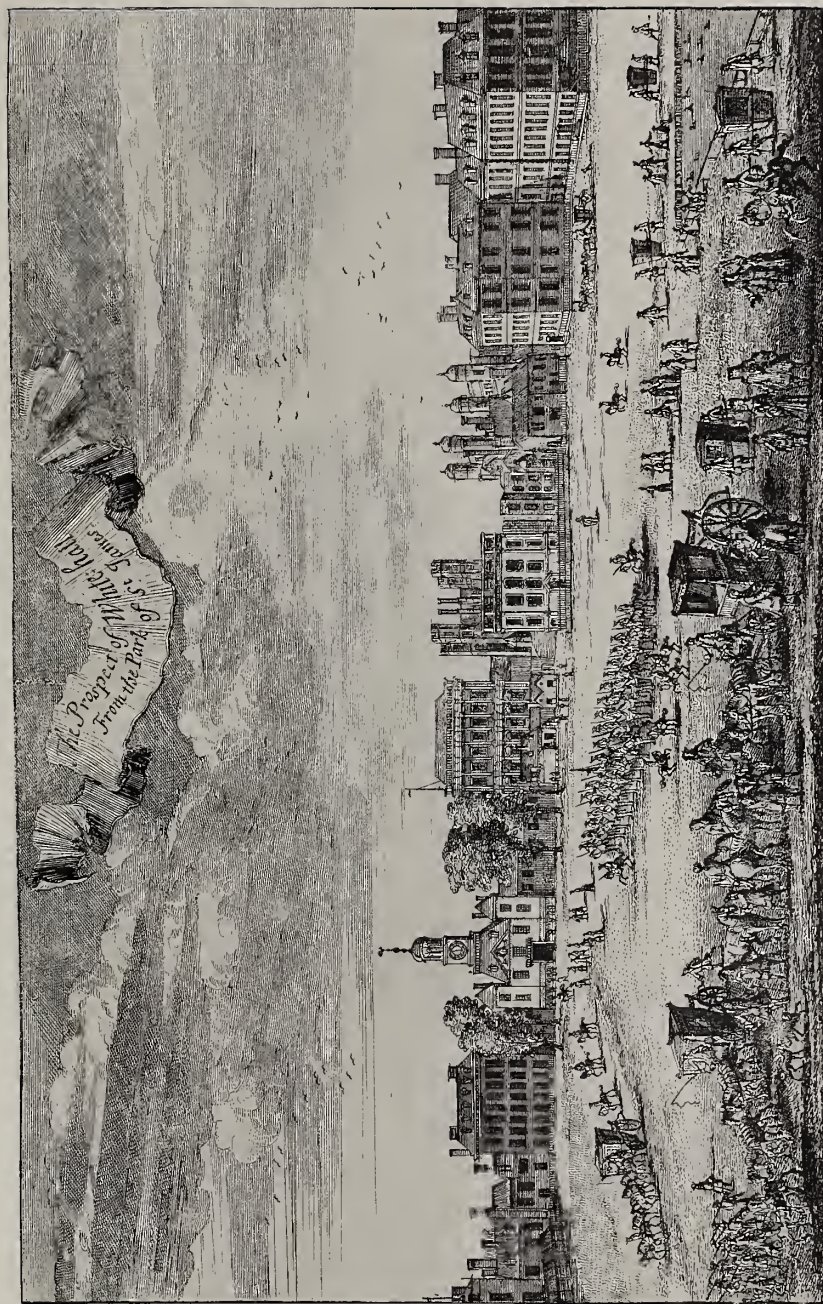
CHAPTER V

WHITEHALL HOUSES

CONSIDERING its extent, Whitehall is to-day not very largely associated with private residences; true, Montagu House stands there, but it is the last of the great palaces of London to do so, and now that Northumberland House is no more, is the most easterly of any of them, although, curiously enough, in date of building it is one of the most modern; the fine houses in Richmond Terrace still remain, but their number may be counted on one hand, while those comprising Whitehall Gardens are nearly all occupied by Government offices, and those in Whitehall Place are consecrated to professional uses. Indeed the dominant note in this famous thoroughfare is that of officialdom; stately buildings are to be seen on all sides; the Admiralty and the Home Office; the immense War Office and the hardly less extensive Local Government Board buildings; but of the private palaces that once congregated together at this spot, only one, Gwydyr House, remains, and that has been converted to alien uses.

This exodus of private owners seems at first rather curious, but the reason for it is easily explained. Nearly all the great houses that formerly stood here had their origin in the Palace which extended from the present Horse Guards Avenue on the north to Richmond Terrace on the south, and embraced the area from the river bank to where the Treasury Buildings now stand on the west.¹ All this ground was, of course, Crown property, and after the great fire at the Palace and the subsequent desertion of it for St. James's and Buckingham House, leases were granted to several people who erected fine houses on the various sites allotted them; in the course of time these leases fell in, and the tendency to reside in other quarters such as Mayfair particularly, coupled perhaps with the heavy terms required for the renewal of leases, where any dis-

¹ A comparison of the plan of Whitehall, dated 1680, with a modern ordnance survey map, will show the extent of the old palace buildings, and the relative position of some of the houses referred to in this chapter; while a later coloured drawing, dated 1816, in the Crace collection, shows the position of those that survived at that time. I have endeavoured to indicate in the text these various positions, as lucidly as I could.



VIEW OF WHITEHALL FROM ST. JAMES'S PARK.

position was shown to renew at all, caused many tenants to give up their residences here; some of which houses were eventually demolished to make way for the great official buildings since erected, while others were converted into Government offices and gradually came, by alteration and rebuilding, to lose all semblance of the private character which once was theirs.

As I deal with these fine houses in turn we shall see how in each individual instance this was the case, and when we note how splendid some of them were, we shall have much food for reflection as to the future of some equally fine houses in our own day, which seem built on the rocks of substantiality, but may have no more lasting career than the great mansions of Whitehall which have for ever passed away.

RICHMOND HOUSE

The first of these private houses which it will be convenient to mention was RICHMOND HOUSE, which occupied a position at the river end of what is now Richmond Terrace, thus named in consequence. In the 1680 plan it is styled "the Duke of Richmond's," it having been at one time in the possession of the Duchess of Portsmouth, whose son by Charles II. was created Duke of Richmond in 1675. When the great fire at the Palace occurred in 1691, it is said by Evelyn to have begun "at the apartments of the late Duchess of Portsmouth, which had been pulled down and rebuilt no less than three times to please her," while Bramston notes that these "lodgings" were "at the end of the Long Gallery"; from this it is difficult to say whether Richmond House is indicated or whether the "lodgings" refer to other apartments in the Palace belonging to the Duchess. I think it is probable that the house itself is not meant, because, in 1709, we find the first Duke petitioning for a grant to be allowed to "repair and build a house," but that if this could not be granted, he states his willingness to be content "with that house that was the Duchess of Richmond's." By this last expression is proved that Richmond House must have at one time been occupied by the widow of the third Duke of Richmond (of the Stuart line), who died in 1702, as in 1709, there was no other Duchess of Richmond recently dead.

Two years later, the lease having been granted, the Duke erected the new mansion, probably more or less on the site of the old house. Some twenty years later, we find the second Duke of Richmond applying for a renewal of the lease together with a grant of a new one of some

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vacant ground which lay between his house and the river, and is now, of course, covered by the Embankment, with the result that he obtained a further term of thirty years expiring in 1763. Not content with this, however, six years later he applied for a lease of houses then occupied by Lord Middleton and Sir Philip Meadows, which were reported to be "old and ruinous," whereupon a fresh lease was granted of these premises, apparently cancelling the former ones of 1709 and 1732, of the whole property for fifty years.

It would appear that the second Duke rebuilt the house from the designs of Lord Burlington. Walpole in recording this fact states that the mansion was ill contrived and inconvenient; it not improbably partook of the same qualities as the noble architect's erection for Marshal Wade in Burlington Gardens, in sacrificing internal comfort to an effective exterior.

It was under the second Duke that those entertainments so long associated with Richmond House, were first inaugurated. Walpole, writing to Mann on May 17, 1749, thus describes one of them: "We have not yet done diverting ourselves: the night before last the Duke of Richmond gave a firework; a codical to the peace. He bought the rockets and wheels that remained in the Pavilion which miscarried, and took the pretence of the Duke of Modena being here to give a charming entertainment. The garden lies with a slope down to the Thames, on which were lighters, from whence were thrown up, after a concert of water-music, a great number of rockets. Then from boats on every side were discharged water-rockets and fires of that kind; and then the wheels which were ranged along the rails of the terrace were played off; and the whole concluded with the illumination of a pavilion on the top of the slope of two pyramids on each side, and of the whole length of the balustrade to the water. You can't conceive a prettier sight; the gardens filled with everybody of fashion, the Duke, the Duke of Modena, and the two black Princes. The King and Princess Emily were in their barge under the terrace, the river was covered with boats, and the shores and adjacent houses with crowds. The Duke of Modena played afterwards at brag, and there was a fine supper for him and the foreigners, of whom there are numbers here."¹

The second Duke of Richmond died in 1750, whereupon his widow, daughter and heiress of William, Earl Cadogan, applied for a fresh lease

¹ Walpole's *Letters to Mann*, vol. ii. pp. 381-382. There is extant a curious engraving entitled "View of the Fireworkes and Illuminations of the Duke of Richmond's, at Whitehall, and on the Thames, of May 15, 1749," published in the following year. Madame de Bocage, in her *Letters on England, &c.*, speaks of entertainments at Richmond House, and of the card parties which used to be held in the gallery of the mansion.

of the mansion and grounds, which being obtained two years afterwards, became, in consequence of the death of the Duchess in 1751, vested in the third Duke, the well-known opponent of Chatham, and to whom the great Pitt was replying in the House of Lords when he fell senseless to the ground. In 1781, as if there were to be no end to these applications, the Duke petitioned for yet another lease, and having obtained it, set about largely altering and improving the mansion, and reclaiming much of the then muddy foreshore of the river; while at the same time the area of the property was increased by a grant of leases of two adjoining houses with the ground attached to them which had once formed part of the Privy garden.

It would appear that his Grace allowed these houses to stand, and only probably wanted a lease of them to prevent inconvenient neighbours, for eight years later one of them was occupied by Lord George Lennox, and the other by Colonel Lennox, who in this very year fought the famous duel with the Duke of York, about which the diarists of the day have so much to say.¹

The last of the many applications for fresh leases was made by the Duke in 1791, when he obtained a renewal for fifty years.

The festivities which had characterised the second Duke's tenure of Richmond House were kept up during his successor's long life. Seven years after his accession to the title the latter married Lady Mary Bruce, an alliance that gave Walpole much satisfaction. "The Duke of Richmond," he writes, to Mann on March 17, 1757, "has made two Balls on his approaching wedding," these entertainments taking place at Richmond House. Later, the Duke having purchased the adjacent house, fitted up a small theatre in it, "where," says Walpole, "two winter's, plays were performed by people of quality." Peter Pindar refers to these theatrical doings, in the following quatrain addressed to the King:

"So much with saving wisdom are you taken,
Drury and Covent Garden seem forsaken.
Since cost attendeth those theatric borders,
Content you go to Richmond House with orders,"

and in a note to this passage he says, "Here is a pretty little nut-shell of a Theatre fitted up for the convenience of ladies and gentlemen of quality who wish to expose themselves."

This was the period in which private theatricals seem to have first sprung into favour among people of fashion; Lady Ossory had a theatre fitted up at Amptill; the Duchess of Marlborough followed with a

¹ See, too, Timbs's *Romance of London*, vol. i. p. 231, for an account of this incident.

more splendid one at Blenheim; while Lord Barrymore's excursions into the Thespian realms, and the playhouse he erected at Wargrave, are matters of notoriety; but of all these, the Duke of Richmond's company seems to have been the best, as his theatre in Whitehall was the most lavishly appointed. The amateur "season" began in April and May, and after people had left town was discontinued, to be resumed in the winter. The first play produced here was "The Way to Keep Him," and at first the number of the audience was limited to eighty,¹ although on one occasion there were no fewer than one hundred and twenty-six. On April 16, 1787, the first performance took place, and among the brilliant audience might have been seen Sir Joshua Reynolds. The *dramatis personæ* included Lord Derby, Sir Harry Englefield, Major Arabin, and Mr. Edgecumbe; while Mrs. Damer, Mrs. Bruce, Mrs. Hobart, and Miss Campbell sustained the female parts. The King and Queen were present at the last representation, and Walpole tells us that the Duke of Richmond officiated as Master of the Ceremonies, and "on the conclusion of the play conducted his guests to a most elegant supper and dessert, where the glass and song went round till past four in the morning"; no wonder the gossiping letter-writer supposes that "the Richmond Theatre will take root."² In the winter a play called "The Wonder" was produced, when Lord Henry Fitzgerald acted so remarkably that Walpole calls him "a prodigy, a perfection," and goes so far as to call Garrick "a monkey" compared to him, complacently adding the *dictum* that "when people of quality can act, they must act their own parts much better than others can mimic them," a theory not agreed to by a writer in the *Town and Country Magazine* who criticised the actors so unmercifully that Walpole imagined him to be some envious professional actor.

During his long life the Duke of Richmond was notable for lavish entertainments, but in addition to these and his well-known political activity, he occupied himself with more lasting interests, and at Richmond House, he formed a splendid collection of casts from the antique; and not only this, but he invited artists to go and study in the gallery he had formed, and a regular school of design was opened here on March 6, 1758, being the first for this particular branch of artistic endeavour to be inaugurated in this country. Silver medals were, by the Duke's munificence, offered as prizes, and such men as Wilton and Cipriani were enrolled amongst the instructors who attended in the gallery in which had been

¹ See letters from Storer to Eden, in the *Auckland Correspondence*, referring to the Richmond House theatricals.

² See *Life of Reynolds*, by Leslie and Taylor, &c.

placed "every apparatus and conveniency that could be required in such a place of study."¹ Here were gathered together no less than twenty-one statues, four or five groups, and a number of antique busts ; several *bassi relievi*, with casts from the Trajan column, and other works. By this noble munificence the third Duke of Richmond properly takes his place among the most considerable of English art-patrons.

This gallery, which was not destroyed in the fire which occurred here in 1791, formed the subject of a sketch by an artist named Parry, which Edwards in his *Anecdotes* mentions particularly as being the only representation of the place in existence.

Like so many schemes of private enterprise, that of the Duke laid itself open to criticism ; and on one occasion, as he was obliged to be absent abroad with his regiment, the medals usually distributed at Christmas were not allotted, whereupon the students posted up on the door of the gallery the following notice : "The Right Honourable the Duke of Richmond, being obliged to join his regiment abroad, will pay the premiums as soon as he comes home" ; and when the Duke did return, he found to his annoyance another notice apologising for his poverty and expressing his regret at having offered premiums at all.² This so enraged him, that he shut up the gallery and transferred its contents to the Society of Artists which had been started in 1765. Later, some of the casts became the property of the Royal Academy, and may still probably be in use in the school there.

The Duke not only did so much for the encouragement of art, but he also sat to Reynolds (in October 1758), and patronised Romney by inducing the great Burke to give sittings to the rising man, somewhat, it is supposed, to Sir Joshua's chagrin.

The disastrous fire at Richmond House, referred to above, almost gutted the mansion which had been noted not only for its remarkable collection of antique statues, but for its other beautiful and costly contents. The house, however, was rebuilt from the designs of Wyatt, at which time the two separate residences referred to before were incorporated in the new erection.

The fifth Duke, who was aide-de-camp to Wellington, in the Peninsula, did not apparently appreciate the place, for the year after his accession to the title, viz. in 1820, he sold his interest to the Crown, which gave him £4300 for the twenty-one unexpired years of his lease. Three years later the mansion and other buildings appertaining to it were pulled down, and in the following year Richmond Terrace was built on its site.

That Richmond House must have been a building, not only of

¹ Taylor's *Fine Arts in England*.

² Leslie and Taylor's *Life of Reynolds*.

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importance but also of architectural merit, is evidenced by the fact that even the critical Ralph speaks well of it. It has, he says "greatly the advantage of its neighbour (old Montagu House); there is something of manner as well as of simplicity in this; it satisfies the eye and answers in the prospect; and yet," he adds, "even here the entrance is intolerable not only because 'tis bad in itself, but because it hides all the lower part of the house."¹

PEMBROKE HOUSE

Another important mansion in Whitehall was PEMBROKE HOUSE, which was also at a later date known as Harrington House, and which is now represented by No. 7 Whitehall Gardens.

In 1717, the Crown granted the piece of waste land on which it afterwards stood to Henry, Lord Herbert, the eldest son of the eighth Earl of Pembroke, and the "Curio" of Pope's *Moral Essays*, where his taste for "Statues, dirty gods and coins," is referred to. At that time the site was, according to the official report, "almost covered with heaps of rubbish, part of the ruins of the Palace."

Some years after Lord Herbert had obtained this grant, he proceeded to erect a mansion on the ground acquired, the architect being Colin Campbell, who gives an elevation and ground plan of the building in his *Vitruvius Britannicus*.² Ralph remarks that at one time the Earl's house "seemed at least to be pretty, and wanted but little of being elegant; but now his lordship has thought proper to alter it in such a manner, that it would be hardly known by either of these epithets; to hide the whole front of a house for the sake of the offices is certainly something of a mistake." With its stabling and outbuildings it seems, as Canon Sheppard points out, to have covered more ground than had been leased to Lord Herbert; no doubt in those easygoing times, so far as boundaries at least were concerned, a few square yards more or less were not considered to make much difference, and were appropriated with impunity!

It is probable that a thirty-one years' lease had been obtained, as this seems to have been about the usual term granted; and, in 1728, we find Lord Herbert applying for, and obtaining two years later, a new fifty years' lease. A few years later still, there arose a quarrel between Lord

¹ *Critical Review of Buildings in London.*

² In the Crace collection is also a ground plan of the mansion, which, according to Mr. Blomfield, was designed in 1724.

Herbert and Lady Portland who occupied certain houses where "the three most northern" residences in Whitehall Gardens now stand, as to the exclusive enjoyment of the Terrace belonging to the old Palace, the use of which the Countess had arrogated to herself. The matter¹ does not particularly concern us here, except inasmuch as in one of his rejoinders to Lady Portland's counter-complaints, Lord Pembroke, as he had become, having succeeded his father in the title, in 1733, incidentally mentions that he had laid out no less than £8000 on the mansion he had erected, which shows that it was even at that time a place of some importance.

In 1744, Lord Pembroke applies for a fresh lease, and, I suppose, having in view his former recriminations with Lady Portland on the question of the use of the Terrace, he desired that in the new lease should be included "the portion of Queen Mary's Terras which was used for pleasure and ornament to the said Queen's lodgings, which stood where your memorialist's house stands." A fresh lease for fifty years was granted, but the petition had apparently opened the eyes of the authorities to Lord Pembroke's encroachments, for the official report notices the fact that a "Portall" to the courtyard of Pembroke House was standing on ground not included in the former lease; however, the easygoing authorities let the matter pass.

Lord Pembroke died in 1751, and five years after that event, his son and successor, the tenth Earl, whom Walpole calls "a fine boy," and who married the second daughter of Charles, Duke of Marlborough, demolished the old house which had become ruinous, and erected a still more imposing residence on its site. A ground plan of this house (dated 1797), preserved at the Board of Works, shows not only that the mansion was of considerable extent, but also that the stables and outbuildings, and particularly a large riding-school, which had been erected on the site of a portion of the Terrace, covered a large area. In consequence of this fresh outlay a new lease was applied for, and granted in 1757.² The plan just referred to was prepared when the eleventh Earl of Pembroke, who had succeeded his father in 1794, applied for still another lease, in which application he states that the sum of £22,000 had been expended on the rebuilding of the mansion forty years previously, and that it was then (in 1797) in "substantial and complete repair."

Six years later a renewed lease for sixty-three years was granted, and apparently Lord Pembroke continued to use the mansion as his London residence till his death in 1827.

¹ It is dealt with fully in Canon Sheppard's *Royal Palace of Whitehall*.

² In the Crace collection is an elevation of "the Rt. Hon. Lord Herbert, his house in Whitehall," dated 1761.

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A few years later, however, the twelfth Earl granted a twenty-one years' lease of the property to the fourth Earl of Harrington, who, as Lord Petersham, had been the famous dandy of the Regency, and had married in 1831, Miss Maria Foote the actress. Lord Harrington seems to have been renting the mansion previously to the year in which he was married, until he had arranged for this lease, five years after obtaining which he made some additions to the residence and changed its name to Harrington House. Lord Albemarle in his *Fifty Years of my Life* speaks of the theatricals at Harrington House, which had been inaugurated by the Duchesses of Bedford and Leinster and Lady Caroline Sandford, for the amusement of their father, the third Earl of Harrington, "whose eyes and infirmities prevented him from stirring abroad." As the third Earl died in 1829, it would seem that these displays first took place at the earlier town residence of the family in the precincts of St. James's Palace, but they were probably continued at Harrington House, Whitehall, especially as the reigning Countess's former career peculiarly fitted her for presiding over such entertainments. Among those who figured in them were, besides Lord Albemarle himself then the Hon. George Keppel, the Duchess of Leinster and Lady Caroline Sandford; Mrs. Leicester Stanhope, afterwards fifth Countess of Harrington, and the Hon. Georgina Elphinstone, later Lady William Godolphin Osborne.

Lord Harrington died in 1851, whereupon, although eight years of his term had yet to expire, the Crown took over the house for use as the office of the Inclosure and Tithe Commissioners, when it seems to have been known again as Pembroke House; at least so it is termed in a letter of 1855, in which year a portion of it was used by the War Office, which continued here for some four years.

Its later history, as part of Government offices,¹ hardly concerns us here; but it is interesting to know that among the contents of the mansion when it was occupied by the Herbert family, were certain pictures which more recently hung in Herbert House, Belgrave Square, when that mansion was the residence of Lady Herbert of Lea.

GWYDYR HOUSE

GWYDYR HOUSE is practically the only one of the former great private residences in Whitehall which to-day preserves unaltered its former outward appearance; it is besides the best known to "the man in the

¹ It is now occupied by the Board of Trade.

street," for it occupies a prominent position here, which the proximity of newer and more pretentious buildings only helps to accentuate.

It owes its existence to Sir Peter Burrell, created in 1796, Lord Gwydyr, and who is known also as the husband of Mrs. Burrell, one of the few untitled Patronesses of Almack's, and a person of very great importance in the fashionable annals of her day.

In 1769, Sir Peter Burrell, who had been created a Baronet three years earlier, and was to be made a peer twenty-seven years later, held the office of Surveyor-General of Land Revenue, and being concerned for the safety of various books and documents connected with his office, applied for the grant "of a small piece of void and useless ground adjoining to the Lamplighters' Office in Whitehall . . . on which a house might be erected."

In consequence of this application, a lease was granted in the following year. Finding, however, that the site granted him was not sufficient for his purpose, Sir Peter asked for an additional grant of an adjoining piece of ground to the north and also desired that the new lease should include the former site as well; all of which he obtained at the end of 1771.

In the following year Gwydyr House was begun,¹ and when completed is stated to have cost some £6000, while it would seem that it became Sir Peter's private residence as well as his official headquarters, for, in 1802, the second Lord Gwydyr applied for a new lease of the residence, which was granted for a term to expire in 1871.

Subsequently the Baroness Willoughby d'Eresby who had, as Lady Elizabeth Burrell, wife of Mr. Burrell, Sir Peter's son, succeeded to that famous title through the sudden death of her brother the Duke of Ancaster, purchased the leasehold interest in the house. Her husband became Lord Gwydyr, in course of time, and here assembled a remarkable collection of china. He is known to have been so enthusiastic in pursuit of his hobby, that on one occasion, as Mary Berry records in 1809, he purchased in Fogg's china-shop a service of Sèvres for £600, a great price in those days, while at the same time he bought a quantity of other valuable and beautiful porcelain.

Wraxall gives an interesting account of the extraordinary good fortune of the family with whom Gwydyr House is chiefly identified. Sir Peter's second daughter married Lord Algernon Percy; the third became the wife, first of the Duke of Hamilton, and on his death, of the first Marquis of Exeter, in 1800; and the other daughter was in 1779, wedded, as his second wife, to the second Duke of Northumberland;

¹ According to a statement in *London Past and Present*, it was erected in 1796, from designs by John Marquand, a surveyor in the Woods and Forests office.

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while his son, as I have indicated, married Elizabeth Bertie, eldest daughter of the third Duke of Ancaster. Well might Wraxall remark that within his remembrance "in no private family has that prosperous chain of events which we denominate fortune, appeared to be so conspicuously displayed, or so strongly exemplified."

On the death of the Baroness Willoughby d'Eresby, the leasehold interest enjoyed by that lady was left by her to her daughter, who had become Countess of Clare, for her life; but she seems not to have resided here, but to have let the house, for in 1838 the Reform Club was occupying it pending the building of their fine headquarters in Pall Mall; and later in 1842, the Government paid £700 a year for the mansion as a home for the Commissioners of Woods. In this way it was held for twenty-seven years, when the Poor Law Board replaced them.

The lease to the Burrell family expired, as I have said, in 1871, on which event the Commissioners of Woods took over the property at an annual rental of £1300. The Local Government Board was here, in the following year, for a short time; and in 1876 the Charity Commissioners took possession and occupied the place until it was taken over by the Board of Trade.

A wing of one storey was added to the building ten years since; but with that exception Gwydyr House remains externally as it appeared when erected over one hundred and thirty years ago.

CARRINGTON, FORMERLY GOWER, HOUSE

Unlike Gwydyr House, the once famous residence known as CARRINGTON HOUSE has entirely disappeared, the site on which it stood being to-day partly occupied by the stupendous buildings of the War Office, and the Horse Guards Avenue which runs on the south side of it.

It was erected somewhere between the years 1764 and 1779, by the second Lord Gower, who was created Marquis of Stafford in 1786, and of whom Wraxall wrote that "his vast property, when added to his alliances of consanguinity, or of marriage, with the first ducal families in the country, rendered him one of the most considerable subjects in the Kingdom."¹

When Lord Gower built the house, the site on which it was erected was officially described "as the front part towards the street (Whitehall), consisting of old buildings that escaped the fire when Whitehall was burned"; the architect employed being Sir William Chambers. On

¹ *Posthumous Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 232.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

CARRINGTON HOUSE, WHITEHALL.

its completion Lord Gower applied for a lease of fifty years from 1779, which was granted him.

Some idea of the magnificence of the house may be gained from a drawing of the grand staircase, made by C. I. Richardson, in 1819, now in the Gardner collection, and reproduced in Canon Sheppard's book on Whitehall. From this it will be seen how spacious must have been the mansion which contained so fine and beautifully proportioned a staircase and hall.

Lord Gower, who had been created Marquis of Stafford, died in 1803, and was succeeded by his son, the second Marquis, and famous as a mighty picture-collector in his day.¹ He sold the lease of Gower House, as it was then called, in 1810, to Lord Carrington, and his reason probably for doing so was because he had inherited from his uncle, the Duke of Bridgewater, the house in Cleveland Square,² with its magnificent gallery of pictures which he himself had done much to bring together. Lord Carrington, who had been Mr. Robert Smith and was created an Irish peer in 1796, which peerage was made "of the United Kingdom," in the following year, changed the name of the house to that of his title, and it was occupied by him and his son the second Baron as their town residence till 1863, after which date it was let on short tenancies. The second Baron died in 1868, and was succeeded by the third Baron, the present Earl Carrington.

The lease expired in 1885, when a proposal was made to emulate the American manner of shifting houses bodily, by moving the main portion of Carrington House some distance to the north, which would have placed it somewhere on the site of the present War Office. The cost of doing this was estimated by Colonel Seddon, R.E., who went thoroughly into the matter, at £4000; and although Mr. Gladstone, who greatly admired the old house and particularly its splendid internal decorations, was in favour of such an experiment being tried, which the initial cost of the mansion, something between £40,000 and £60,000, would have certainly made worth attempting, various considerations unfortunately caused the scheme to be abandoned, with the result that the fabric was ruthlessly demolished, in 1886, when the materials were sold by public auction. Speaking of this drastic measure, Lord Carrington says: "I was evicted without compensation at six months' notice," and he adds that "the site for years remained a desolate disgrace to London—a striking example of the iniquity and robbery of the leasehold system."

It is said that on the demolition of Carrington House, there were

¹ See notice of him in the chapter on Bridgewater House.

² Cleveland House, which preceded the present Bridgewater House, as we shall see.

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found among its foundations at the depths of some five or six feet, "the remains of several clearly defined and well-made roads," which must evidently have been formed before the Palace buildings extended over the large area they covered in the days of Charles II.;¹ while there was also discovered, among other relics, an old elm pile pier or jetty, indicating the former proximity of the river, as well as some glass tear-bottles, &c.

By the kindness of Lord Carrington, I have had access to a book of photographs and paper-cuttings referring to Carrington House, and by its help I am enabled to give some details of the splendid interior of the mansion, as it was when still one of the great houses of London.

In the outer Hall was preserved the sedan-chair which the first Lady Carrington habitually used; and the niches in the inner Hall at the foot of the grand staircase were filled with statues and busts; a French clock mounted on a pedestal, and a porcelain figure of Marie Antoinette stood on a commode. In the Dining-Room, which had a rounded end, in the middle of which was the fireplace of white statuary marble inlaid with Brocatella, hung the equestrian portrait of Careno da Monanda; while the walls and ceiling were decorated with wreaths and garlands in high relief. The Music-Room was octagonal in form, and in four of its walls were recesses reaching nearly to the ceiling and filled with costly porcelain plates and plaques arranged in patterns. With each side of the Music-Room, Lord and Lady Carrington's Sitting-Rooms respectively communicated; in the former hung a portrait of Pitt over the mantel-piece; while Gainsborough's girl with a dog in her arms was placed close by, and other pictures included a Dutch sea-piece and an old view of Whitehall showing the Banqueting-Room; in the latter, a beautiful head of a girl by Greuze was noticeable, and the note of eighteenth-century French art was further carried out by cabinets of rare Sèvres china, and a remarkable piece of Louis Quinze furniture containing a clock surmounted by a group of cupids in Clodian's graceful style.

Another fine room was that known as Lord Carrington's Dressing-Room, which had been restored on the advice of Count d'Orsay; the walls being hung in green satin, and the ceiling and doors decorated in white and gold. It was, by-the-bye, from the windows of this room that the Prince and Princess of Wales, with a distinguished company, witnessed the great Liberal procession in favour of the Reform Bill of 1884, which marched down Whitehall on July 21st of that year, and occupied over three hours in passing Carrington House.

The Blue Drawing-Room was one of the most beautiful apartments in the mansion, and here the ceiling had been painted by Angelica

¹ A writer in the *Birmingham Post* for 1900, quoted by Canon Sheppard.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE GRAND STAIRCASE, CARRINGTON HOUSE.

Kauffmann; while the compartments of the ceiling of the Ball-Room were also decorated by some almost equally facile brush. This room was a superb one in every way, being no less than 60 feet long by 30 wide and proportionately lofty. It was decorated in the classic style of which Chambers was so well-known an exponent, and with the painted ceiling was in every way worthy of the many great functions that took place within it. The splendid marble mantelpiece was, at the sale of the materials of the house, purchased by Lord Carrington, and is now at Wycombe Abbey. These mantelpieces were, indeed, a feature of the house and fetched large prices; that in the Blue Drawing-Room, of white marble inlaid with slabs of Sienna, realising £75; the carved wooden one in the Steward's Room, with massive caryatids, £60; that in the Music-Room, of white statuary marble inlaid with Brocatella, £56; and those in other parts of the house proportionately good amounts.¹

It is interesting to know that all the floors of Carrington House were of oak; while the stone steps of the great staircase were no less than six feet in width.

PORTLAND HOUSE

Just as Richmond House stood to the south of the present Montagu House, so the large residence of the Duke of Portland once occupied ground immediately to the north. The area covered by it and its gardens was leased to William, first Earl of Portland, of the Bentinck line, in 1696. This nobleman, who is known for his adherence to, and personal friendship with, William III., by whom he was raised to the peerage in 1689, is spoken of by St. Simon in these terms: "Portland parut avec un éclat personnel, une politesse, un air du monde et de cour, une galanterie et des graces qui surprirent. Avec cela, beaucoup de dignité, même de hauteur."² He married, *en second noces*, the Dowager Baroness Berkeley of Stratton, whom I suppose to have been the widow of the third Lord Berkeley of Stratton.

Although the usual first term of leases for ground within the old palace precincts appears to have been generally for thirty-one years, that granted to the Earl was for forty-two. For the benefit of those who may have Vertue's plan of 1680 before them, the following extract from the lease will help to show the relative position of the ground obtained, to the buildings of the palace. It is spoken of as "abutting westerly

¹ Most of these were purchased by Lord Hillingdon.

² *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 69.

upon another passage . . . called the Stone Gallery . . . and adjoining southerly to other ground whereon certain buildings formerly stood, late consumed by the fire, and then ruined, and a kitchen there of Algernon, Earl of Essex, extending in that part from a place where the Stone Gallery also was formerly, upon the west part of the River Thames . . . and abutting easterly upon a yard or garden called the 'Terras Walk,' and upon the River of Thames, and containing in that part 105 feet, little more or less."¹

From a manuscript plan preserved in the Office of Woods and Forests, Portland House appears to have been a large and imposing structure, but from the official reports made when fresh leases were applied for, mention is only made of "a slight old building, part timber and part brick," with some out-buildings, together estimated at only £200 per annum, as they are described when, in 1724, the first Duke of Portland (so created in 1716, having succeeded his father as second Earl in 1709) petitioned for a new lease. The Duke died two years later and before the lease had been granted, when his widow, in 1738, obtained a fresh grant for a term of thirty-six years. Six years after this, the second Duke of Portland applied for and obtained a fresh lease of fifty years of the property, at which time the Dowager Countess of Portland (widow of the first Earl) also obtained a fresh lease for a similar term, of premises she had occupied for some time previous to the year 1719, which, it is stated, comprised as well as ground "a house which she had repaired at a cost of at least £500," and which was officially acknowledged to be "very substantially built."

Again, so much later as 1772, when the third Duke applied for a fresh lease, the buildings were described as being "in so ruinous a condition at the time of the last renewal that there were several props under them to support them from falling down," and although "they are now in a better state," proceeds the report, they were only valued at £200 per annum, as they had been in 1724.

What I therefore gather from the very complicated nature of the data given, is that the property belonged to the head of the Bentinck family, and that the house on it was used as a Dower House, first by the Dowager Countess and afterwards by the Dowager Duchess, widow of the first Duke.² I am somewhat confirmed in this by the fact that the first Duke of Portland lived in St. James's Square from 1710 to

¹ Quoted in *The Old Palace of Whitehall*; where it is stated that although the mansion was afterwards known as Portland House, no mention is made of it in the books of the Office of Woods and Forests.

² In the Crace collection is a "View of the House and Museum of the late Duchess of Portland"; being a drawing by J. Bromley, dated 1796.

1722, at old St. Albans House, and had previously resided in another house close by before that, so that it is obvious that he did not reside in Whitehall; and the only mention of a residence in any sense comparable to the outlines given on the plan I have referred to before, occurs in connection with petitions by the Countess of Portland for new leases. It was this lady who had a lengthy dispute with her neighbour, Lord Pembroke, on the question of her right to use the "Terras Walk," with the result that she surrendered her lease, and obtained the fresh one in 1744, to which I have before referred. Subsequently her house was divided into two dwellings, one of them being occupied, in 1773, by Captain, afterwards Admiral, Bentinck, and the other by a Mr. Andrew Stone, who died in 1774; when, a little over thirty years later, his widow obtained a further term of seventeen years of the premises.

In 1805, the Duke of Portland sold his interest in the property to the Crown, and certain buildings upon it were soon afterwards pulled down. There still, however, remained the old mansion, divided, as I have said, into two residences. That portion once belonging to Stone later became the property of Lady Exeter, who lived there, and who, when Whitehall Gardens were commenced on the site of that portion of the property sold by the Duke of Portland, refused to give up her interest in the house. The lease of it, however, ran out in 1824, when Sir Robert Peel became the owner, and he and Mr. Grant, who had come into possession of Admiral Bentinck's residence adjoining, pulled down their old houses and built three on their site, Mr. Grant being responsible for two of them. It is said that Sir Robert's cost him £14,000 to build, and the two erected by Mr. Grant together but £1000 more. These three residences completed the terrace as designed by the Crown. It was in his house here that Sir Robert Peel died in 1850, having taken up his residence here in 1828. It is numbered 4 Whitehall Gardens, and remains substantially as it was, so far at any rate as external appearance goes, in his day, when its walls were covered by that magnificent collection of pictures which now forms one of the glories of the National Gallery. Here Haydon used to come with his eloquent appeals for State aid on behalf of historical painting, and here much of the history of the earlier years of Queen Victoria's reign was made. Having this latter point in view it is curious and interesting to know that at No. 2 Benjamin Disraeli lived for some years from 1873, and it is probable that here he wrote *Lothair*, in which occurs the famous description of Stafford House which I have noticed elsewhere in this volume.

FIFE HOUSE

Most of the great houses on the Thames side of old Whitehall had grounds or rights of way extending to the river, but one of them—FIFE HOUSE—stood practically on its very bank, where old Whitehall Stairs had been before.

Its site appears to have been occupied originally by a house built about 1685 by Patrick Lambe, one of Charles II.'s master-cooks, who had obtained at that date a thirty-one years' lease for the purpose. This house appears to have been burnt at the time of the disastrous fire, and so much later as 1717, Edmund Dunch is found obtaining a lease of the ground, which lease was confirmed to his widow five years later, for a term of fifty years; when, however, thirty years of it had expired, she applied for a fresh one, which being granted, became some ten years later vested in Sir George and Lady Oxenden, who stated their intention of building one or two new houses on the site; this, however, they did not do, but sold their lease to the second Earl of Fife, who, in 1764, obtained a fresh lease of the property, and it would seem practically rebuilt the mansion in 1772. He found, however, that the foreshore between his land and the river was "dumping ground" for all the refuse of the neighbourhood, and he applied to be allowed to "embank to low water," and to take the ground thus recovered into his own garden. Although it was officially stated that such a proposed embankment would not be liable to affect the navigation of the river, and would prove an efficient remedy against the nuisance complained of, and although a lease had been granted for that purpose in 1782, nothing appears to have been done till 1805, when, in an application for a fresh lease, Lord Fife points out that beyond having spent a large amount in "building and adorning" the house, he was then occupied in forming, at great expense, an embankment on the ground leased to him over twenty years previously.

Four years after this, however, Lord Fife died, when his lease was assigned to the Earl of Liverpool, in consideration of a sum of £12,000, and he, in 1825, obtained a fresh lease of the whole property. Lord Liverpool, whose career as a statesman is well known, was Prime Minister from 1812 to 1827, and it was in the latter year that he was seized with a paralytic stroke in the library here, which eventually caused his death in 1829, when his half-brother, the third Earl, succeeded him in the ownership of the mansion; he dying in September 1851, the lease was assigned to Mr. George Savile Foljambe, his son-in-law, who resided here till 1860, eight years after which date the property reverted to the Crown.

Mr. Foljambe's son was created Lord Hawkesbury in 1893,¹ and in his town residence, 2 Carlton House Terrace, is now preserved the bulk of the furniture which was formerly in Fife House, and which was removed hither some forty-six years since, when that residence was given up.

Pennant gives some details of the interior decorations of Fife House : "In the great room is some very fine tapestry," he says, and adds, "I never can sufficiently admire the expression of passions in two of the subjects ; the fine history of Joseph disclosing himself to his brethren, and that of Susanna accused by the two elders. Here are also great numbers of fine paintings by foreign masters ; but, as I confine myself to those which relate to our own country, I shall only mention a small three-quarters of Mary Stuart, with her child, an infant, standing on a table before her. This beautiful performance is on marble. A head of Charles I., when Prince of Wales, done in Spain, when he was there in 1625,² on his romantic expedition to court the Infanta. It is supposed to be the work of Velasquez. A portrait of William, Earl of Pembroke, Lord High Chamberlain in the beginning of the reign of Charles I. ; a small full length in black, with his white rod in one hand, his hat in the other, standing in a room looking into a garden. Such is the merit of this piece, that, notwithstanding it is supposed to have been the performance of Jameson, the Scotch Vandyck, yet it hath often been attributed to the great Flemish painter."

The pictures of a later date which once hung here included Romney's portrait of the first Earl of Liverpool ; two of the second Earl by Hoppner and Lawrence respectively, and a portrait of William Pitt.

Fife House existed for just upon a hundred years, having been completed in 1772 and demolished in 1869. Although without any particular pretensions to architectural beauty, its rooms were commodious and its staircase fine ; while its grounds, after the addition had been made to them by the enclosing and embanking of the foreshore, must have been delightful ; and Pennant remarks on the matchless view obtained from them of the two bridges, "with the magnificent expanse of water, Somerset House, St. Paul's, and multitudes of other objects less magnificent, but which serve to complete the beautiful scene."

It was this proximity to the river that made it possible to bring the coal supply to the house by water, and to shoot the coal direct from barges into the cellar—perhaps a unique method, so far as nineteenth century houses are concerned, of delivering fuel.

¹ The third Lord Liverpool was also third Lord Hawkesbury, of a former creation (1786), and the title was thus restored in favour of Mr. Foljambe.

² This is an error ; Charles was of course in Spain in 1623.

Two other interesting facts regarding Fife House are recorded, one being that the old entrance gates are now at the Duke of Fife's late residence at Sheen, or were till recently (for the place has since been sold), they having been purchased by Lord Carrington and presented to the Duke on his marriage; and the other that Lord Fife, who built the mansion, swore that if he lived in London he would do so on Scotch soil, for which purpose gravel was brought from Doune (afterwards called Macduff) in Scotland to form the foundations of the mansion!¹

There were of course a number of lesser houses on this, the river, side of Whitehall—Cromwell House, and Holdernes House known later as Michael Angelo Taylor's House; Malmesbury House, and Lord Grantham's residence, all situated in what was once Whitehall Yard, where the Horse Guards Avenue and the War Office now stand, but they were not of the importance of those already mentioned in this chapter. On the other side of Whitehall, however, were several extremely important mansions, one or two of which, sadly curtailed and incorporated with the great series of Government buildings that now stand there, must be mentioned. Of these are Dover House; Stanhope or Dorset House; Wallingford House; and Rochester or Clarendon House. Dover House still exists; Wallingford House is incorporated in the Admiralty; Rochester House has long since passed away; and only a portion, but that a considerable one, of Stanhope House still remains behind the frontage of the Treasury.

DOVER HOUSE

Like many of the great houses in Whitehall, DOVER HOUSE has passed through various vicissitudes, and has had several changes of nomenclature; that which it still bears being derived from the title of its last private owner. As it still exists it is easy to identify its relative position with that of old Whitehall. Thus we see that the main portion of the building—that is, the part facing the Horse Guards Parade—lies outside the precincts of the palace, while the entrance in Whitehall, with the large Dome and Portico, stands on the site of the lodgings of the Duke of Ormonde, which joined the famous Holbein Gateway on the west side, so that the exact

¹ A drawing by T. Chawner, dated 1828, is in the Crace collection, and shows the entrance to Fife House. The gates were immediately behind Carrington House, to the east, and Sir John Vanbrugh's little house, afterwards used as the Royal United Service Institution, stood adjoining them to the north. To a spot near here the colony of rooks, once domiciled in the trees of Carlton House gardens, migrated in 1827.

relative position of that structure to the present thoroughfare can be at once realised.

The earliest mention of the original house occurs in the year 1717, when a lease of it was granted to Mr. Hugh Boscawen for the usual thirty-one years. Mr. Boscawen occupied the position of Comptroller of the Household from 1714 to 1720, and as such had been already in official possession of a portion of the Duke of Ormonde's old lodgings. Adjoining these were certain rooms occupied by Mr. Vanhuls or Van Huls, as it is variously spelt, who had been Clerk of the Robes to Queen Anne; and soon after obtaining his lease, Mr. Boscawen acquired these apartments also. On June 18th, 1720, he was created Viscount Falmouth, and in the same year he applied for a fresh lease of his original holding together with Mr. Vanhuls' lodgings, and, in addition, of a small piece of ground on what is now the Horse Guards Parade, but was then known by its old name of the Tilt Yard. This application was granted, but power was reserved to the Crown to pull down Holbein's Gateway, and to make the buildings abutting on Whitehall level with the thoroughfare, which meant the cutting off one apartment which in Vertue's plan of 1680 appears to be part and parcel with the gate itself, but which had been occupied, with the rest of his lodgings, by the Duke of Ormonde.

Lord Falmouth, one of those who deserted Walpole's Ministry on the question of the investigation of the sale of the forfeited South Sea Company estates, and whom Hervey called "a blundering blockhead who spoke on one side and voted on the other," on which a wit said that the noble lord was evidently determined to do the Government all the harm he could, as he spoke for them and voted against them, died in 1734, and four years later his widow, who, by-the-bye, was niece of the great Duke of Marlborough, petitioned for a fresh lease, which was granted for thirty-seven years from 1752 (the former lease being due to expire in that year). Two years later, however, this lease was disposed of to Sir Matthew Featherstonehaugh, who, having obtained a still further extension, rebuilt the house from the designs of James Paine, the architect.¹ On his death twenty years later, his widow obtained a further lease for the rather odd term of nineteen years, from 1805. But in the meantime—in 1787, to be precise—Sir Henry Featherstonehaugh, who had succeeded his father in the baronetcy, sold the leasehold interest to the Duke of York for £12,600. In the following year, a Royal Warrant having been obtained for the purpose, the Duke reconstructed the mansion by adding a new front to Whitehall, consisting of the Dome and Portico which still exist, as well as

¹ The work was executed between 1754 and 1758. There is a plan of the basement of Dover House in the Crace collection.

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a grand staircase in the Ionic style designed by Henry Holland, a view of which, entitled "The Duke of York's house, as altered by Holland, 1787," is in the Crace collection.¹ *A propos* of the circular entrance Hall, Lord North is said to have remarked: "Then the Duke of York, it would seem, has been sent to the Round House, and the Prince of Wales is put in the Pillory"; this referring, of course, to the pillars which once stood in the front of Carlton House, and now support the portico of the National Gallery. The Duke also obtained powers to rail in some extra ground on the Horse Guards Parade. Having made these improvements, His Royal Highness applied for, and obtained, a further lease of fifty years from 1791, and gave the mansion the name of York House. But the Duke, who never seems to have been happy for long in one place, had about this time cast envious eyes on the first Lord Melbourne's fine freehold residence in Piccadilly, now known as Albany, and having come to terms with his lordship, exchanged York House for Melbourne House in November 1792, making an equivalent money payment in view of his residence being only leasehold.

York House now became known as Melbourne House,² and as its existing lease was due to expire in 1842, Lord Melbourne, in 1823, obtained a further extension for forty years from the former date. Seven years later, however, he died, whereupon his executors assigned his interest in the property to the Rt. Hon. James Welbore Agar-Ellis, son and heir of Viscount Clifden, and afterwards the accomplished Lord Dover, who wrote a "Life of Frederick the Great," among other productions. After his death, his widow became possessed of it and resided here for a time, and in 1864 it passed to Lord Clifden. He lived here till his death, after which event Lady Clifden continued here till the expiration of the lease in 1882, when for three years longer she occupied it on a yearly tenancy. The Government then took possession of the property and converted it into the office of the Chief Secretary for Scotland and other cognate branches of the Civil Service.

STANHOPE, OR DORSET HOUSE

Rather to the south of Dover House stood STANHOPE, or as it was later called, DORSET HOUSE, after it had been enlarged. Its Whitehall

¹ In the same collection is a print of the mansion by Miller, engraved by Medland, and dated 1795; and also another entitled "Melbourne House, formerly York House."

² It is stated in *London Past and Present*, that in 1774 the mansion had already been occupied by Lord Melbourne, whose famous son, the future Prime Minister, was born here, five years later; while the same authority states that General Amherst once resided here. If so, it must have been let on occasion by Lady Featherstonehaugh, which is not improbable.

front, a portion of which still remains, occupies ground once covered by the lodgings of the Duke of Monmouth, abutting to the north, on the entrance to the Cockpit, and thus occupying an almost central position on the west side of the road, between Holbein's Gate and the King Street Gate. The Surveyor-General's report confirms this, for the house is there described as "situate in or near ye part of ye Pallace afore-said, called ye Cockpit : on ye west side of ye Street, between ye two gates, leading from Charing Cross to Westminster." The portion towards St. James's Park occupied part of the site of the Duke of Albemarle's lodgings, which lay to the east and south of the Cockpit.

Although, according to Canon Sheppard, the first lease of the house was granted in 1717, an advertisement in the *London Gazette*,¹ dated 1672, indirectly proves that it was known as Stanhope House thus much earlier ; I give the extract as being in other ways also interesting :—

"There was a trunk on Saturday last, being the 18th inst. (July) cut off from behind the Duke of Albemarle's coach, wherein there was a gold George, 18 shirts, a Tennis sute laced, with several fronts and laced Cravats and other linen ; if any can give tidings of them to Mr. Lymbyery, the Duke's Steward at Stanhope House, near Whitehall, they shall have five pounds for their pains and all charges defrayed."

It would therefore seem that the Duke's lodgings were then known by this name. But why "Stanhope"? It sounds like a daring anticipation, for there is no record of the place belonging to the Stanhope family till the lease of 1717 was granted to Thomas Pitt, Esq., trustee and father-in-law of the Rt. Hon. James Stanhope, who was created Viscount Stanhope in this very year. This James Stanhope was the grandson of the second Earl of Chesterfield, and therefore cousin of the fourth and great Earl. Now this second Earl lived, and died in Bloomsbury Square, in 1713, but it is not improbable that at one period of his career he may have had lodgings assigned to him in Whitehall (for he was well known as a devoted royalist), and that these apartments adjoined those of the Duke of Albemarle, and were once known collectively as Stanhope House, and further, that the lease granted on behalf of his grandson was an extension of an original grant. This is, I confess, mere conjecture, but the place could hardly have been known, in 1672, as Stanhope House unless it had had some connection with the Stanhope family.

The 1717 lease was for thirty-one years, and having been obtained, Mr. Pitt expended a considerable sum of money in improving the property, and a further lease of ground in St. James's Park, apparently just beyond the old Cockpit, was obtained at the same time.

¹ Quoted in *London Past and Present*.

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Lord Stanhope did not enjoy possession of the property for long, for, in 1721, he died, his wife only surviving him two years, when the place was sold to Lionel Cranfield, who succeeded his father as the seventh Earl of Dorset in 1707, and was created a Duke thirteen years later. The Duke, who figures largely in the political and social annals of the early Georges, was, according to Mrs. Delany, "very graceful and princely," while Lord Shelburne calls him "in all respects a perfect English courtier." From him Stanhope House took its later name of Dorset House.

Shortly after coming into possession, the Duke applied for a fresh lease, to embrace not only the portion he had become possessed of, but also certain lodgings occupied by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, which were part and parcel of this property, being, I assume, portions of the Duke of Albemarle's lodgings, which, by Vertue's plan, are shown as extending over a large area—indeed from the north of the Cockpit to Downing Street. This application was followed by the granting of a new fifty-years' lease (the old one being surrendered) of the whole property, including these ecclesiastical apartments; the Duke, at the same time, agreeing to permit the Archbishop and Bishop to remain in possession till they had been otherwise accommodated. Nearly twenty years later another fifty-years' lease was obtained by the Duke, probably in consequence, as was generally the case, of his having either rebuilt the place, or added to and repaired it.

In 1763, the Duke died, when the lease became the property of his well-known third son, Lord George Sackville, afterwards Lord George Germain and Viscount Sackville (1782), who had been born in 1716, in his father's then residence in the Haymarket. Lord George applied, in 1772, for a fresh lease, which was granted for a term of seventeen years from 1805, the date of the expiration of the existing one. Lord Sackville, however, died on August 26th, 1785, when the lease of Dorset House was transferred to his nephew, John Frederick, who had succeeded as third Duke of Dorset in 1769. At his death in 1799, his widow (Arabella, daughter of Sir Charles Cope, Bart.), continued to reside here, and in 1803 she applied for a fresh lease in favour of herself and her second husband, Charles, Lord Whitworth, whom she had married in 1801.

The name of Lord Whitworth was well known in the diplomatic world at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Envoy Extraordinary to Copenhagen in 1800, he was also Ambassador to Paris from 1801 to 1803, during which time occurred that incident, at one of the official receptions, when Bonaparte's celebrated rudeness to the envoy precipitated, as it was meant to do, war between this country and France. Wraxall speaks of Whitworth as being "highly favoured by nature," and

affirms that "his address even exceeded his figure." Sir Thomas Lawrence painted a well-known portrait of him, and in his earlier days, Horace Walpole had issued from the Strawberry Hill Press his *Account of Russia*.

Soon after applying for a new lease of Dorset House the Duchess of Dorset offered to sell her interest in the property to the Crown, but the Crown not only did not wish to buy, but also refused to grant a new lease. In 1808, however, an arrangement was come to by which the Government did purchase the remainder of the Duchess's interest, and two years later the buildings were adapted for the use of the Treasury, which thereupon proceeded to occupy them, and thus put the final touch to the process by which Stanhope, or Dorset House, as a private residence, ceased to exist.

ROCHESTER HOUSE

The two mansions about which there remains something to say, are ROCHESTER, or as it was sometimes called, CLARENDON HOUSE, and Wallingford House. The former takes its name from Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, the second son of the great Earl of Clarendon, who was created an Earl in 1682, and who filled a number of high offices under four sovereigns, being Ambassador and first Lord of the Treasury under Charles II., Lord High Treasurer under James; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under William III., and Lord President of the Council under Anne. He was thus a person of vast importance in his day; and when Burnet remarks that "he was thought the smoothest man in the court," we can well understand that, to have served successfully so many variously-minded rulers, he certainly must have been.

He was living in the house I am now speaking of, somewhere between 1679 and 1686, probably in the former year, when he became first Lord of the Treasury. By Vertue's plan the site of the house is shown as occupied by lodgings appertaining to one Captain Cooke;¹ at least so it is assumed, as the exact position of Rochester House appears never to have been quite satisfactorily identified. In 1686, says Canon Sheppard, Lord Rochester "directed the Surveyor-General to view the house near the Privy Garden, where he lived, and to make a Constat" (*i.e.* to draw up particulars for a lease) "in order to the passing to him of a lease of such

¹ This was the Captain Cooke mentioned by Evelyn as being considered "ye best singer after ye Italian manner of any in England," and to whom Pepys has so many references. It was he who, after serving in the royal army, was made, at the Restoration, Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal. He was a fine musician, and died in 1672.

part thereof as was not in the lease, already for thirty-one years . . . for such a term of reversion as might make up the present term to be thirty-one years." This was presently done, and by its terms, which I need not recapitulate here, it would appear that there were two separate houses on the property in question, one being on the site of Captain Cooke's premises, and the other adjoining them and abutting on the King Street Gateway, which would be nearly at the north-east corner of Downing Street, together with certain buildings on the other side of the road at the south-west angle of the Privy Garden.

On Lord Rochester's death, his son Henry, who succeeded him as second Earl, applied for a fresh lease of fifty years, in order that it might be worth his while to repair and otherwise spend money on the property, which was stated to be badly in need of it. This request appears to have been acceded to, but whether wholly or only in a modified form, is not clear. However the matter, as it affects us here, is not of great importance, because some dozen years later the Crown appears to have resumed possession of the property, one of the reasons given for its doing so being the desire to demolish the King Street Gate, which, according to Pennant, was taken down in 1723, as was the Holbein Gate thirty-six years later.

In 1725, on the application of Horatio Walpole, Auditor and Surveyor-General of His Majesty's Revenues, who required an office at this time, a portion of Rochester House was granted to him; and some years later (1738) he obtained a lease of an ale-house and three other houses at the corner of Downing Street, specifically to enlarge his premises, which however, he does not appear, after all, to have done. A succession of leases was subsequently granted to the Walpoles, but the last one (for a reversionary term of nineteen years from 1814) was purchased by the Crown, the old buildings taken down, and Government offices eventually erected on their site.

Indeed, as will be seen, the details as to Rochester House are somewhat vague, and at best technical; but it seemed to require a word on account of the one illustrious person, Hyde, Earl of Rochester, whose residence for a time it was. Little Wallingford and Pickering Houses are in much the same case, and as they were smaller and had no central figure of interest about them, although they were connected at various times with the Hay and Glyn families, I need say nothing here regarding their history, especially as that will be found given as fully as documentary evidence allows, in Canon Sheppard's work.

WALLINGFORD HOUSE

Of the last of the more important Whitehall mansions, WALLINGFORD HOUSE, or, as it was also once called, Peterborough House, which has for so many years been identified with the Admiralty, the interest is, however, of a much more striking kind. It is connected with a number of important historical figures from the reign of James I. to that of Charles II. Here lived the brilliant Buckingham, and later the Republican Fleetwood; here also Lady Peterborough kept up her state, and here for a short time the profligate second Duke of Buckingham may have passed some restless hours of his feverish existence. But, notwithstanding these private owners, the place seems always to have had a semi-official air about it, which made its transformation into a Government office not so startling an innovation as is the case with some other of the great houses in Whitehall.

Wallingford House was erected in the reign of James I. by Sir William Knollys. Sir William was Treasurer of the Household to Queen Elizabeth, and very nearly occupied a still more exalted position, for the Queen had named him, according to Miss Strickland, Lord Deputy in Ireland; and it was on this occasion that Lord Essex boldly opposed his nomination, which led to the famous scene when Elizabeth boxed Essex's ears, and he laid his hand on his sword and half turned his back on his royal mistress, who thereupon told him to "go and be hanged."¹

After the Queen's death, Sir William became Treasurer to James I., and was subsequently created Baron Knollys (1603), Viscount Wallingford (1616), and Earl of Banbury (1626). He seems to have taken the second title on account of his having been Constable of Wallingford Castle and High Steward of the Manor of Wallingford, in 1601, and as he gave this name to his London house, it practically proves that the mansion was erected between 1616 and 1621-22, when the Duke of Buckingham bought it, although, as Lord Wallingford's father, Sir Francis Knollys,² is said to have occupied an official residence here, before him, it is not improbable that he merely rebuilt or enlarged a former mansion here. Under what circumstances George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, purchased Wallingford House is not quite clear. Lord Wallingford did not die till 1632, but if John Chamberlain, a correspondent of Sir Dudley Carleton's, is correct, the purchase was arranged partly on a money basis, and partly

¹ Camden.

² He was only son of Robert Knollys, of Rotherfield Greys, Oxon., and was related to Queen Elizabeth, having married Catherine, daughter of William Carey by the Lady Mary Boleyn, sister of Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's mother.

“by making Sir Thomas Howard Baron of Charlton and Viscount Andover; and some think the relieving of the Lord of Somerset and his lady out of the Tower.”¹ This latter extraordinary and unsavoury circumstance wove itself, at that time, into so many public and domestic matters that it is not at all improbable that its vitiating influence even affected the changing of the owners of Wallingford House. In any case, it is a curious fact that, in 1615, orders were given to Somerset “to keep his chamber near the Cockpit,” and to his Countess “to keep her chamber at the Blackfriars, or at Lord Knolly’s house near the Tiltyard.”

In the year after the Duke of Buckingham had taken possession, his first child, called “Jacobina” after the King, was born here in March, and a contemporary records that “during the illness of the Marchioness,² the King prayed heartily for her, and was at Wallingford House early and late.”

It would appear that at first Buckingham fixed his private residence at Wallingford House; but when, on the fall of Bacon, York House became vacant, and the Duke subsequently obtained it³ for himself, the greater splendour of the latter mansion caused him to give his great and costly entertainments there, although he seems to have still resided at Wallingford House, as is proved by the fact that his son, the second Duke, was born there so much later as 1627; and also that he used it as his official residence, as Bassompierre’s references to it, when he was over here in the previous year as French Ambassador, indicate.

Bassompierre, who never could master the intricacies of the English language, spells Wallingford variously as Valinfort and Valenforaux, and records visiting the Duke here on October 30, 1626, and again on November 20th of the same year. In view of Buckingham’s possession of these two mansions, it is strange to find Howell, the letter-writer, advising him about this time to have a fixed residence; but perhaps it was the Duke’s constant change from one house to the other, that elicited this excellent advice. It must, I think, have been in the gardens of Wallingford House that the following circumstance took place which has been recorded by most of the biographers of Charles I. and of the Duke. It is said that the King was at Spring Gardens, which might easily mean the favourite’s residence close by, watching a game of bowls, when Buckingham remained, unlike the rest of the courtiers, covered. Ob-

¹ *Calendar of State Papers*, 1603–1610. See an interesting note by Croker, in his edition of Bassompierre’s *Embassy to England*, p. 70.

² Villiers had been created Marquis of Buckingham in 1619, and was advanced to the dukedom in 1623.

³ See chapter ii., where the connection of Buckingham with York House is dealt with.

serving this want of respect, a Scotchman who was present suddenly knocked off the Duke's hat, exclaiming, "Off with your hat before the King." Buckingham immediately kicked the officious gentleman, whereupon Charles interposed with, "Let him alone, George, he is either mad or a fool." "No, sir," replied the man, "I am a sober man; and if your Majesty would give me leave, I will tell you that of this man which many know and none dare speak."¹

On the assassination of Buckingham, in 1628, his body was brought from Portsmouth to Wallingford House, and here lay in state before its interment. At this date, as the second Duke was but an infant, the Board of Admiralty—which Buckingham had instituted when he was Lord High Admiral, and whose sittings were in his lifetime held here—was continued at Wallingford House after his death; and it appears that the Lord Treasurer's Office was also domiciled here, as warrants signed Weston, Cottington, and Portland,² are extant bearing dates of 1632 and 1634, and given at Wallingford House.

In the following year, the Dowager Duchess (she was daughter of the sixth Earl of Rutland) was married here to Lord Dunluce, an event thus mentioned by Garrard in a letter to Wentworth: ³ "April 14, 1635. The Duchess of Buckingham was married about a week since to the Lord Dunluce, and are (*sic*) to live at Wallingford House, whence the Treasurer's family removes." How long the Duchess and her husband resided here is uncertain, but in the year in which Charles I. was beheaded, the house was in the occupation of the second Earl of Peterborough and his Countess, daughter of the Earl of Thomond, and it was from its roof that Archbishop Usher saw Charles led to execution. The sight proved too much for the old (he was then sixty-nine) royalist who had lost nearly all his property in Ireland through his devotion to the King; and as, from the distance, he saw his master standing on the scaffold, his fortitude entirely forsook him, and sinking down with horror, he was carried fainting to his rooms.

Under the Commonwealth, the General Council of the officers of the army, known as the "Wallingford House Party," assembled here after the Protector's death, with the intention of preventing Monk's attempt to bring about the Restoration. Vane and Fleetwood were leaders in this movement, and as the latter was at that time residing here, it seems fairly obvious that the meeting was organised by him. The

¹ The story is also given in the *Curiosities of Literature*, and by Jesse in his *Memoirs of the Court of England under the Stuarts*.

² Weston, afterwards Lord Portland, was Lord Treasurer, and Cottington Under Treasurer, at this period.

³ See the *Strafford Papers*, vol. i. p. 413.

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details of this fruitless conspiracy are given at length in Ludlow's interesting *Memoirs*.¹

At the Restoration, Wallingford House reverted to the second Duke of Buckingham, but although he used it as a private residence, it also continued in its official capacity as the headquarters of the Admiralty Board, and as the office of the Lord Treasurer.

It was here, too, that in 1670 the Duke inaugurated that famous (or infamous) "Cabal Ministry," whose meetings, however, he was too wise to allow to take place in a spot so exposed to public observation, and consequently they were held in the solitude of Ham House instead. Hence, too, in the same and the two following years he started on those extraordinary embassies to the Continent in which he was the principal and splendid figure.

This man, "so various that he seemed to be, not one but all mankind's epitome," as Dryden sings, found time in the midst of political and diplomatic duties to write *The Rehearsal*, produced in 1670; just as he had a few years previously personally superintended all the details connected with the lying in state here of the body of Cowley, the poet, who had been his intimate friend and college companion, and who died while staying at Wallingford House. Evelyn thus records the circumstances of the poet's obsequies, under date of August 3, 1667: "Went to Mr. Cowley's funerall, whose corps lay at Wallingford House, and was thence conveyed to Westminster Abbey in a hearse with six horses and all funerall decency, neare an hundred coaches of noblemen and persons of qualitie following; among these all the witts of the towne, divers bishops and clergymen."

Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, who was Lord Treasurer, and was created a peer in 1672, and died in the September of the following year, was one of those officially connected with Wallingford House, and in the *Calendar of State Papers* are various letters emanating from the Lord Treasurer's office, and dated from here, notably one from Clifford himself on April 29, 1673, and others in 1674 and 1676.

Clifford's tragic end is well known, and the following reference to Evelyn's last interview with him at Wallingford House has therefore a pathetic interest. Writes the diarist, on August 18, 1672: "I went to take leave of him at Wallingford House. He was packing up pictures, most of which were of hunting wild beasts, and vaste pieces of bull-baiting, beare-baiting, &c. I found him in his study, and restored to him several papers of state and others of importance, which he had furnished me with, on engaging me to write the Historie of the Holland War, with

¹ See vol. ii. p. 168 *et seq.* of the 1751 edition.

other private letters of his acknowledgments to my Lord Arlington, who from a private gentleman of a very noble family, but inconsiderable fortune, had advanced him from almost nothing. . . . Taking leave of my Lord Clifford, he wrung me by the hand, and looking earnestly on me, bid me good-bye, adding, 'Mr. E., I shall never see you more.' 'No!' said I; 'my lord, what's the meaning of this? I hope I shall see you often and as greates a person againe.' 'No, Mr. E., do not expect it; I will never see this place, this City or Courte againe,' or words of this sound. In this manner, not without almost mutual tears, I parted from him; nor was it long after, but newes was that he was dead, and I have heard from some who I believe knew, he made himself away, after an extraordinary melancholy."

In 1680 Wallingford House was purchased by the Crown and converted into the office of the Admiralty, and fifteen years later a grant was made of a portion of Spring Gardens for use in conjunction with it. The old house was pulled down in 1720, and five years later the present buildings were erected from designs by that Thomas Ripley who, as Walpole says, "wanted taste and fell under the lash of lasting satire"; the satire being that of Pope, who, in the "Dunciad," not only satirically exclaims:

"See under Ripley rise a new Whitehall,"

but also writes:

"Who builds a bridge, that never drove a pile?
Should Ripley venture all the world would smile."

But Walpole seems to infer that this reference was due to the fact that Ripley was not countenanced by Lord Burlington, Pope's patron, and he adds that although the Admiralty is an ugly building, yet, in the disposition of apartments and conveniences, it was superior to the Earl himself.¹

As may be seen from Bowles's view of it, published in 1731, the wings dwarf the central portion; and an ugly wall ran along the Whitehall front. However, De Saussure, who saw it just after its completion, in December 1725, speaks of it as "a fine building," and he adds: "The chief, or president, of the Admiralty resides here; the noblemen who compose its board assemble in its walls; and you can generally see many well-known sea captains and men on business intent."²

¹ *I.e.* superior as to interior arrangements to those mansions, such as Burlington House, Marshal Wade's house, &c., which the Earl had designed. *Anecdotes of Painting.*

² *A Foreign View of England.*

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When the novelty of the new building had somewhat worn off, the unsightliness of the wall before mentioned roused an outcry of artistic indignation, and in 1760 Robert Adam was commissioned to build the screen which at present divides the structure from the street, and which Horace Walpole considered handsome, and later authorities have regarded as one of the most successful of its architect's designs.

In 1733 Admiral Byng, Viscount Torrington, died in apartments that had been allotted to him here; and in 1805 the body of Lord Nelson lay in state here before being taken to St. Paul's.

There are some good Grinling Gibbons carvings and some interesting portraits in the Board Room, and the long connection of the Admiralty with this spot is well sustained; but of the once famous residence of the brilliant Buckingham only a small court, called after his name, and running by the side of the present building, helps to preserve the memory.

ASHBURNHAM HOUSE, WESTMINSTER

In the last chapter, when speaking of Ashburnham House, Dover Street, I mentioned a mansion of the same name in Westminster about which I want to say something more fully; and I do so here, as, although it did not stand actually in Whitehall, its position was so close to that historic spot, that its inclusion in this chapter seems appropriate. Ashburnham House in Little Deans Yard, was probably erected between 1650 and 1660, by John Webb, who appears to have completed the designs of the residence already prepared by his father-in-law and master, Inigo Jones. As in the case of the building of Castle Ashby, also designed by Inigo Jones, the erection of Ashburnham House seems to have been interrupted by the outbreak of the Civil War; and had these troubles not occurred, and Inigo Jones had lived to superintend the building of the mansion, those variations made by Webb, by which Jones's distinctive note was to some degree lost, would not have been present. In any case, the magnificent staircase designed by the greater architect, with its noble cupola and consummate proportions, as well as the splendid over-doors and other details, were all carefully preserved by Webb, whose plaster decorations in the cornices and elsewhere were probably as fine as anything his master would have produced in the same *genre*. The mansion appears to have been erected for William Ashburnham, the younger brother of that 'Jack' Ashburnham famous for his devotion to Charles I., and the companion of that monarch's flight to the

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Scotch army and his subsequent escape from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight. William was also an officer of distinction in the Royal army during the civil war, and was rewarded for his loyalty, on the Restoration, by being made cofferer of the King's Household. He married about 1629, a near relative, Jane, daughter of John, Lord Butler of Woodhall, who is described as the "young, beautiful, and rich widow" of James Ley, Earl of Marlborough, of whom she was the third wife. William Ashburnham died in 1679, his wife having predeceased him in 1672.

I have seen it stated that Ashburnham House was erected for 'Jack' Ashburnham,¹ but no authority is given for this, and I am led to believe that, as I have stated, William was its builder, from a passage in Pepys's Diary. It is known that the ground on which the mansion was built belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, a lease from which body had first to be obtained; now, on May 3, 1667, the diarist was in the company of Sir Stephen Fox and William Ashburnham, then cofferer to the Household, and drove with them to Westminster, on which occasion Pepys notes how "the Cofferer" told "us odd stories how he was dealt with by the men of the Church at Westminster *in taking a lease of them* at the King's coming in (viz., the Restoration), and particularly the devilish coveteousness of Dr. Busby" (the famous head-master of Westminster, and in 1660 a Prebendary of Westminster). It may be objected that in this, William Ashburnham was his brother's agent, but I am more inclined to think that he was acting for himself.

In any case the property passed to John Ashburnham, the grand-nephew of William who had no children, who was created Lord Ashburnham in 1689, and died in 1710, when he was succeeded in the title (and the occupancy of the house) by his son, the second Baron, who died six months after his father. The third Baron, afterwards (1730) created first Earl, a brother of the second, upon whom thereupon devolved the family estates, made arrangements to sell the mansion,² an advertisement to that effect appearing in the *London Gazette* of January 1729 (new style); and in the following year the lease was purchased by the Crown for the specific purpose of housing the Royal Libraries, including the celebrated Cotton Manuscripts which had been purchased for the nation some twenty years earlier, and had been preserved hitherto in a house in Essex Street. In the following year, however, on Saturday, October 23, a disastrous fire occurred here, and destroyed no less than 114 of the

¹ Britton and Pugin thought so, as do others; but they all have to confess the difficulty of tracing records which appear to have been irrevocably lost.

² Peter Wentworth, writing in this year, says: "Lord Barkley told me Lord Ashburnham's house is to be sold a great penny in Dean's Yard."

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948 volumes of which this portion of the collection consisted, besides badly damaging 98 others.¹

The fire broke out at two o'clock in the morning, in a room immediately beneath that in which the precious manuscripts were stored. Dr. Bentley, the King's Librarian was at the time in residence, and Dr. Freind, the then head-master of Westminster, narrates that he saw the worthy doctor, arrayed only in his dressing-gown and a wig, rush from the burning house, with the famous Alexandrian MSS., the Codex Alexandrinus, in four quarto volumes, under his arms; although Walcott affirms that they were carried out of harm's way by Mr. Casley, the Deputy Librarian. When it is remembered that these precious manuscripts, finely written on vellum probably about the year 300 to 500 A.D., are supposed to be the most ancient MS. of the Greek Bible in uncial character extant, the anxiety of their custodian, whoever he was, for their preservation can be readily understood. The remainder of the books was only partially saved, some being removed in their presses bodily, others being thrown from the windows, and all being more or less damaged by water which was freely played upon them.

In 1739 part of what remained of Ashburnham House was demolished for the purpose of erecting two prebendal residences, and the west wing, now also used as a prebendal house, was alone preserved. This, in its turn, was threatened with destruction so recently as 1881, but happily this iconoclastic step was frustrated. The importance of this preservation will be recognised when it is known that the existing portion contains the famous staircase designed by Inigo Jones, as well as a very fine drawing-room, and the dining-room with its alcove, formerly used as a state bedroom. The staircase is thus specifically described by Britton and Pugin: "Of nearly a square shape, with four ranges of steps placed at right angles one with the other, and as many landings, it was the passage from the ground to the first floor. Its sides are panelled against the wall, and guarded by a rising balustrade. The whole is crowned by an oval dome springing from a bold and enriched entablature supported by a series of twelve columns. At the landing are fluted Ionic columns."² Indeed Sir John Soane thought so highly of the design and proportions of this fine piece of work that he caused careful drawings to be made of it, with which he illustrated one of the lectures he delivered before the Royal Academy.

The position of Ashburnham House was on that part of the Benedictine Abbey of Westminster, called the *Misericorde*, while its garden

¹ *London Past and Present*.

² *Public Edifices of London*, vol. ii. p. 90.

looked on to the Refectory. In the cellars were some remains of the old conventual buildings, and a capital of the time of Edward III. was actually built into the modern foundations.¹ In the garden was a small alcove, the design of which was attributed to Inigo Jones, although Brettingham, in his book on Architecture, claims it as his own just as he did Kent's design for Holkham. There are extant a number of views of this once fine mansion—in Ware's, and Batty Langley's works (the latter of whom first, in 1737, attributed it to Webb as against the general supposition that it was wholly the work of Inigo Jones); in Smith's *Westminster*, and Britton and Pugin's *Public Edifices*, while the Society for Photographing Relics of Old London included some excellent views of it in that valuable series

¹ Walcott.

CHAPTER VI

APSLEY HOUSE

THERE is no more renowned mansion in the capital than "No. 1, London," as Apsley House has been, appropriately both from its position and its intrinsic significance, called. For Englishmen it represents, crystallised in stone, more fully perhaps than any other dwelling in this country, an idea, a sentiment; and although we, as a race, are not overmuch given to the cultivation of abstract qualities or the worship of mere formulas, yet if we can ever be said to lapse into such phases of thought, it is to this house that our minds will, I think, turn, as the spot consecrated to the memory of one who may justly be termed the saviour of his country.

Little more than fifty years have passed away since the great captain of the age might have been seen in the flesh leaving or entering that stern, uncompromising edifice whose outward appearance presented a not remote resemblance to the character of its great master; but even to-day, when the bustle of life has taken on itself a more pronounced tone, and we have, as it seems, little time to ponder on the past, the most prosaic can hardly gaze at those portals without feeling a touch of pride at the thought that a common kinship binds him to the man with whom its stones are indissolubly connected—a man whose very presence rendered security more sure and whose passing seemed to carry with it half the safety of the nation.

Appropriately enough for other reasons, as it seems, was Apsley House called "No 1, London," for if we look at the old plans of this portion of the town, we shall see that its site was just at the south-west corner of that mass of buildings which then constituted the west-end of the town. Appropriately, too, was this position the residence of the great captain, for Hyde Park Corner is connected with at least two military engagements—one, when Sir Thomas Wyatt placed his ordnance here in 1554; and the other, when the citizens of London threw up a fort with four bastions, in anticipation of Charles I.'s march on the city in 1642.

Close by was the turnpike forming, as it were, the entrance to London at this point, and beyond it, to the further west, fields, or at most scattered



Photo H. N. King.

THE WATERLOO CHAMBER, APSLEY HOUSE.

dwellings, were all that met the eye where now vast streets and myriads of houses form what we are accustomed to term the West-End. Indeed, in 1787, with slight exceptions, the south of Knightsbridge was as much open country as Hyde Park to the north, and St. James's and the Green Parks to the east. It is unnecessary to recapitulate what may be so well gleaned from Larwood's book and other analogous sources, with regard to the early history of Hyde Park, of which Apsley House almost forms an integral part, but it will be interesting to remember that as early as the days of Cromwell's usurpation, several houses were erected on the ground now covered by Apsley House to No. 1, Hamilton Place. Indeed the latter thoroughfare takes its name from James Hamilton, who succeeded the Duke of Gloucester, son of Charles I., in the Rangership of the Park, at the Restoration, to whom the leases of these houses were granted; a grant confirmed to Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, for the usual term of ninety-nine years, in 1692. The actual site of Apsley House itself was for many years occupied by the Ranger's Lodge, and practically adjoining this was an apple-stall, connected with which site the story goes that it was given to an old soldier, named Allen, whom the King, George II., recognised as having fought at the Battle of Dettingen; possibly he may have been the very man who stayed the headlong flight of his Majesty's runaway horse, on which occasion, as we all know, the monarch dismounted and elected to fight during the rest of the day on foot, exclaiming: "For then I know I shan't run away," or words in German or very broken English, to that effect. Allen and his wife kept the stall, and, we are to suppose, thrived thereon, for their son became an attorney; and in course of time, Allen having died and the apple-stall having fallen down, it was presumed that the site had reverted to the Crown, or, at any rate, it was found convenient to suppose so, and it was forthwith leased to Henry, Lord Apsley, afterwards Lord Bathurst, who proceeded to erect a house on the site.¹ But the Crown and Lord Apsley seem to have reckoned without Mr. Attorney Allen, who put in a claim for compensation and unlawful ejectment. So successfully did he make out his claim, too, that, after much negotiation, it was arranged that the very considerable sum of £450 per annum ground rent should be awarded him. As there was a well-known saying at the time that here was "a suit by one old woman against another, and the Chancellor (Lord Bathurst was Chancellor from 1771-8) has been beaten in his own court," it would appear that the widow Allen was the protagonist in the struggle,

¹ Among the Adam drawings, preserved in the Soane Museum, are details of certain decorative work which Adam executed here for Lord Bathurst. The ceiling of the Portico Room is part of the Adam designs, and the arms of the Bathursts are still to be seen there.

and her son, the attorney, her legal adviser. The inference that the Chancellor was "an old woman" gives point to a well-known story. His father, Pope's friend, was a jovial old fellow, and on one occasion, when nearly ninety, having some friends to dine with him, he was urged by his son to retire to rest, which he resolutely refused to do, and when his son had himself withdrawn, he said to his cronies: "Come, my good friends, since the *old gentleman* is gone to bed, I think we may venture to crack another bottle."

That Lord Bathurst was one of the least distinguished of those who have filled the high office of Lord Chancellor, is attested by Lord Campbell who, in his lives of those dignitaries, goes so far as to consider the erection of Apsley House as the most notable act of his life; his portrait by Brown certainly does not give any particular evidence either of distinction or intelligence, although the many high offices his Lordship held at various times ought to have been a guarantee of his attainments being far above the average.

There is extant a drawing showing Hyde Park as it appeared in 1750, with the cottage and apple-stall in front of it, and the adjoining tenements on the site of which Apsley House now stands, as well as the old wooden gates of the Park, which were replaced, in 1828, by the beautifully designed screen and gates of Decimus Burton; only three years after which alteration the old toll gate close by had been sold by auction in pursuance of an Act of Parliament which had been passed abolishing certain tolls.¹

Apsley House was erected, in red brick, from the designs of the Adam brothers, and occupied some seven years (1771-8, or during the exact period of Lord Apsley's tenure of the Lord Chancellorship) in its construction. Considering the renown² of its architects it cannot be said to have greatly added to the artistic features of the metropolis; but it was, as may be seen in the drawing taken of it in 1800, which is in the Crace collection, commodious, and the excellence of its situation is undeniable.

It remained in its original form till 1828, when the stone front and portico were added, as well as the picture-gallery and rooms under, and the mansion wholly encased under the direction of Sir Geoffrey Wyatville. But before that date three notable events had occurred in

¹ A woodcut of this sale is given in Hone's *Everyday Book*. But although the toll was done away with here it seems to have been merely transferred to Albert Gate, where it flourished for many years.

² If the story be true which avers that Lord Bathurst was his own architect, and found that he had omitted to provide for a staircase from the second to the third floor, the Adams can only be considered as superintending, and very indifferently superintending, the erection of the building.

its history ; one was the death of its builder, Lord Bathurst, in 1794 ;¹ the other, the sale of the property by his son, the third Earl, to the Marquis Wellesley, in 1810 ; the last and most important, its resale by the Marquis, in 1820, to his younger and more famous brother, Arthur Wellesley, who had been created Duke of Wellington six years previously.² It was the last-named who carried out the improvements already referred to, making certain important additions which included the famous Waterloo Gallery, and other apartments on the west side of the house. Ten years later the Duke purchased the Crown's interest in the property for £9530 ; the Crown reserving the right to forbid the erection of any other house or houses on the site.

One of the best remembered additions made to the house by the great Duke, were the Bramah bullet-proof shutters to the windows of the Waterloo Gallery, which were placed there on account of the mob's breaking these windows during the Reform Bill riots of 1831. The circumstances of this indignity to a national hero—this example of "benefits forgot," have been well given by Gleig, in his life of Wellington: "The Duke was not in his place in the House of Lords," says his biographer, "on that memorable day when the King went down to dissolve Parliament. He had been in attendance for some time previously, at the sick bed of the Duchess, and she expired just as the Park guns began to fire. He was, therefore, ignorant of the state into which London had fallen, till a surging crowd swept up from Westminster to Piccadilly, shouting, and yelling, and offering violence to all whom they suspected of being Anti-Reformers. By-and-by volleys of stones came crashing through the windows at Apsley House, breaking them to pieces and doing injury to more than one valuable picture in the gallery. The Duke bore the outrage as well as he could, but determined never to run a similar risk again. He guarded his windows, as soon as quiet was restored, with iron shutters, and left them there to the day of his death, a standing memento of a nation's ingratitude." Wellington's remark *à propos* of these shutters is well known. "They shall remain where they are," he said, "as a monument of the gullibility of the mob, and the worthlessness of that sort of popularity for which they who give it can assign no good reason. I don't blame the men who broke my windows. They only did what they were instigated to do by others who ought to have known better. But if any one be disposed to grow giddy with

¹ In 1789, when Queen Charlotte and the Princesses came to London from Kew, to see the illuminations on the occasion of George III.'s recovery, they stayed at Apsley House.

² In the *Court Guide* the Marquis Wellesley is given as residing here in 1815, and in the next year the Duke is entered as owner, but although he would seem to have lived here, possibly renting the place, he did not actually purchase it till 1820.

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popular applause, I think a glance towards these iron shutters will soon sober him."

In connection with these riots, a curious circumstance is mentioned by Lord Stanhope, in his *Notes of Conversations with the Duke of Wellington*: "The Duke," writes Stanhope, "was one day sitting in his room at Apsley House when a stone passed over his head, having broken first a pane in the window, and then breaking another in the glass book-case along the wall. In this instance, having the position of the two broken panes to go by, they were able to calculate the line of the stone, and they reckoned that the person flinging it must have stood nearly as far off as Stanhope Street." A good throw, indeed!

Wellington was hardly the man to forget the treatment he received at this time, or to overestimate the value of popular applause or disapprobation; and although what he is reported to have said at the time may be the correct version, the following extract from Raikes's *Journal* would seem to indicate that he considered the mob as a whole had something more to do with the breaking of his windows than merely to fulfil the wishes of its leaders: "Some time afterwards, when he had regained all his popularity, and began to enjoy that great and high reputation which he now, it is to be hoped, will carry to the grave, he was riding up Constitution Hill, in the Park, followed by an immense mob, who were cheering him in every direction; he heard it all with the most stoical indifference, never putting his horse out of a walk, or seeming to regard them, till he leisurely arrived at Apsley House, when he stopped at the gate, turned round to the rabble, and then pointing with his finger to the iron blinds which still closed the windows, he made them a sarcastic bow, and entered the court without saying a word."

Of the innumerable great entertainments, political meetings, dinners, receptions, &c., which took place at Apsley House during the life of the "great Duke," it is unnecessary to make specific mention; nor could a chapter contain the names of the great ones who came here as his guests: the record of these functions is to be found in the innumerable diaries and letters of the period. But one of them claims, and justly claims, a word; I mean the Waterloo Banquet, which every year, on the anniversary of that fateful day, was given by the Duke. The room in which this dinner was held is that looking on to Hyde Park, whose windows, seven in number, are still pointed out to strangers and the few Londoners who are ignorant of their historic interest. Here, on the anniversary of the 18th June 1815, in every year during Wellington's life, were gathered together the officers who fought on and survived the field of Waterloo. The well-known engraving published by Messrs. Moon, Boys, & Graves,

perpetuates the brilliant scene, with the hero of a hundred fights its central figure and all the chivalry of the country gathered around him. Then was used the magnificent service of Sèvres presented to the Duke by Louis XVIII. ; then, the Silver Plateau given him by the people of Portugal and presented by the Regent of that country ; while on the sideboard glittered the superb silver gilt shield designed by Stothard, which the Merchants and Bankers of London had offered to the great leader who had kept intact the safety and honour of the capital.

Before anything is said of the treasures with which Apsley House is filled, it will be interesting to note one or two circumstances connected with it ; thus it is a curious fact that the Duke was never known to refer to it either in conversation or by letter, as Apsley House ; during his life-time it was regarded as "Wellington's House"—and such a title was properly deemed a sufficient indication. It is also interesting to know that the bullet-proof shutters were removed in 1856, four years after the Duke's death ; while the screen in front of the door, which Wellington had had erected to hide him from the crowd that was used to assemble to see him mount his horse, was taken down by the second Duke, who said that "he was sure no crowd would assemble to see *him* get on *his* horse." The well-known appearance of the great Duke, in his habitual blue coat and white duck trousers, must not be forgotten, as no one who once saw it can forget it. I know a dear old clergyman, one of whose most cherished memories is that on one occasion he guided the great man across the road, and received from him in recognition a touch of the hat and a "thank'ee, thank'ee," which, such is the power of genius, is as clearly heard in that old parson's ears as if it had been uttered yesterday. Lord Ellesmere records too, how he met the Duke one day and how "he walked slow and stopped often to expatiate. Recognition and reverence of all as usual. Hats were taken off ; passers made excuse for stopping to gaze. Young surgeons on the steps of St. George's Hospital forgot their lecture and their patients, and even the butcher's boy pulled up his cart, as he stopped at the gate of Apsley House."

Indeed he was such an institution that people were used to gather together in front of his dwelling, to await his entrance or exit ; country cousins were taken to its vicinity, on the chance of seeing the "sights self" ; omnibus drivers took pride in pointing out his residence, and if in luck's way the great man *in propria personâ* ; shopkeepers ran to their doors as he passed, and all the world from the peer to the postman saluted him ; he was indeed, as Carlyle says of Frederick, "every inch a king," and like the great Prussian presented himself in a Spartan simplicity of

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vestment which caught the popular imagination far more than could the regal panoply.

It is for such memories that Apsley House¹ may well be considered the most important of those private palaces with which I am dealing. Although the whole of Apsley House is reminiscent of the great figure that dominates its every chamber, there are two rooms—the largest and one of the smallest—which are particularly connected with it; and in these two rooms are reflected the varied characteristics that chiefly embody in our minds the qualities of the great Duke: his pre-eminent genius as a commander, and his inherent simplicity of taste and manner; his “transcendent fame,” and his innate modesty. The one is the great Waterloo Gallery; the other, the bedroom which he habitually used. No greater antithesis could well be imagined than that furnished by these two apartments—the one small and ill-lighted, with its iron bedstead, so small, by-the-bye, that some one once observed to the Duke that there was no room to turn in it, to which the great man replied: “When I want to turn in bed I know it is time to turn out”; the other, magnificent in proportion, superb in decoration, and lighted not only by its seven windows looking out on the finest prospect in London, but also illuminated by the wonders of pictorial art which hang on its walls, and made more gorgeous by a hundred beautiful treasures scattered about it.

Here hangs Van Dyck's Charles I.—a replica of the well-known picture in the Royal Collection, which was bought by Lord Cowley in Spain, and is generally supposed to have been presented by Charles I. to Philip IV.; here are two portraits by Sir Antonio More, and a delightful Wouwermans, “The Return from the Chase,” mentioned with much praise by Waagen. No fewer than seven Velasquezs of great power and beauty are included in the pictures that grace the gallery, four of which were among those taken in Joseph Bonaparte's carriage after the battle of Vittoria. One of these, “The Water-Carrier,” is said to have been produced by the great Spaniard when he was but twenty; he had found himself even thus early, and how surely! This fine picture is the *chef-d'œuvre* of that class of work—kitchen and tavern scenes after the manner of the Dutch masters, which constituted Velasquez's first independent excursion into artistic activity. The painter took it with him, says Sir Walter Armstrong, when he went to Madrid, and on the completion of the palace of Buen Retiro, it was selected to form part of the decorations of one of the rooms. Later it found a home in the new Bourbon Palace, and together with the famous Correggio, it was carried away by Joseph

¹ It may be noted that further alterations, other than those I have noted, were made to the house in 1853, under the direction of Philip Hardwick, the architect.

Bonaparte in his flight after Vittoria. Together with its companion canvas it was sent by Wellington to Ferdinand, who begged the conqueror's acceptance of both works. Sir Walter Armstrong, in noting the simplicity and fidelity of the work, remarks that its striking effect is produced by the easy and natural juxtaposition of the three heads—that of the water-seller himself, who stands before a rough table, his left hand on the great stoppered jar at his side, and in his right a glass goblet; and those of his two boyish customers, one of whom is just taking the glass of water from the hands of the *Aguador*.¹

The other works by Velasquez are portraits and landscapes; one of them, a presentment of Pope Innocent X., is supposed to be the study for the picture in the Doria Pamfili Palace. The still powerful and vigorous, if sinister features of Innocent, probably one of the ugliest men of his day, were just those to which such an artist as Velasquez was able to do the fullest justice; and even if it were the case that the then Cardinal's coarse and sensual features were seriously urged as a reason for his not receiving the Tiara, and were given by Guido to the Satan in his St. Michael, still they afforded Velasquez the opportunity of producing one of his most remarkable portraits. Sir Walter Armstrong, indeed, goes so far as to affirm that by the side of this picture, even the Leo X. of Raphael, to say nothing of that master's Julius II., seems lifeless and wooden; the work at Apsley House presents us simply with the head and bust of the Pope—whereas the Doria Pamfili picture is almost full length, and shows the hands, one of which is holding a paper, to be full of power and character. Another portrait is that of the poet Quevedo—with his unornamental and prodigious—we can but hope useful—horn spectacles.² Quevedo had injured his sight by incessant application to study in his youth, which necessitated the use of these spectacles. The picture in question shows him wearing a dark doublet on which is sewn the cross of Santiago, and was thus probably painted before the poet fell into disgrace, and still filled the post of secretary to the King. Another splendid example of this great master, is the picture of two boys at a table, one of whom with his back to the spectator is drinking, while the other faces him; there is also a portrait of a Spanish gentleman, and two vigorous landscapes from the same hand, one of the latter being a view of Pampeluna, the capital of Navarre, which was purchased by the first Duke, in 1844, from the Brackenbury collection. Then perhaps above all, there is a small but perfect Correggio—"Christ in the Garden of

¹ *Velasquez*, by Sir Walter Armstrong.

² Formerly in Lady Stuart's collection, and bought by the Duke from Smith, of Bond Street, for £105, at the suggestion of Lord Ellesmere.

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Gethsemane," of which Vasari was so enthusiastic that he specifically speaks of it when he saw it at Reggio, as "*la piu bella cosa che si possa vedere di suo*," a verdict substantially re-echoed by all later judges. The head of Christ with the single ray of light which falls upon it, is extraordinarily fine; and the arrangement by which the light is reflected from the white robe of the central figure on to the disciples in the middle distance, is a *tour de force*; while, notwithstanding that the work is finished with the utmost minuteness, there is a breadth of treatment in it which makes it a masterpiece of draughtsmanship and *chiaroscuro*. There is a tradition that this thing of beauty was painted to pay a debt of four scudi which Correggio owed to an apothecary—lucky man of drugs! It was, however, soon after sold for five hundred scudi. The picture belonged to Joseph Bonaparte and had previously been in the gallery of the Princess of the Asturias, at Madrid, where Mengs saw it.¹ After Vittoria, it was found in the King's travelling carriage together, as we have seen, with the Velasquez. Waagen, who criticises very fully, with the utmost admiration this beautiful work, notes that it must at one time have been much exposed to the sun or other heat, as the colour has everywhere shrunk considerably, but that otherwise it was in an excellent state of preservation when he saw it.

The great Duke so greatly treasured this picture that Gurwood once told Haydon, that he kept the key of the glass which covered it himself, and that when the glass was dusty he cleaned it with his handkerchief. Once Gurwood asked the Duke to let him have the key, to which the emphatic reply was "No, I won't."

Another very beautiful picture hanging in the gallery is "The Virgin and Child," by Luini, which was once in the Royal Spanish collection, before Joseph Bonaparte lost it after Vittoria in trying to carry it away. This fine work has been attributed to Andrea del Sarto, and even to the great Leonardo himself, to whose manner it has a remarkable resemblance. Very noticeable, too, is Tintoretto's three-quarter length portrait of Cicogna, Doge of Venice, seated on a red throne, which the great Duke bought from the Dennys collection, in 1845.

There are here two presentments of Caterina Cornaro, the famous Queen of Cyprus, one from the brush of Paul Veronese, the other by Titian. The former is supposed to be the picture which was purchased by Mr. King, at the sale of Beckford's collection in 1823, for the ridiculous

¹ Waagen states that it was engraved so early as 1560, by Custi. The well-known rendering of the same subject in the National Gallery, although stated to be a replica, has by some critics been considered as a fine copy of the original, made by Lodovico Carracci. There are also copies at Florence and Dresden. Archdeacon Coxe states that a beautiful and faithful copy was painted by John Jackson, R.A.

sum of sixteen guineas. A little over twenty years later the Duke bought it from Mr. Graves, for £105.

Among the other Titians in the gallery is the portrait of his mistress, three-quarter length and life size, and a *Danæ*, both of which were among the pictures taken from Joseph Bonaparte's travelling carriage after the battle of Vittoria.

Turning to the Murillos, special mention must be made of the "Old Woman eating Porridge," for which the Duke gave £250; "St. Francis of Assisi receiving the Stigmata"; "Isaac blessing Jacob," and his "St. Catherine," all of which came from Spain, among the Vittoria booty. Then there is a fine "St. Catherine of Alexandria," by Claudio Coello; and Spagnoletto's "Peter Repentant"; a "St. John the Baptist"; a half-length portrait of Santiago (St. James), and particularly a gruesome but powerful work by the same master called "La Carcasse," where the skeleton of a huge monster is drawn by nude figures.

In this wonderfully representative gathering of fine works, it is impossible to do more than merely name some of the subjects and their painters; nor is, in this case, more needed, for an elaborate catalogue was prepared some years ago by Evelyn, Duchess of Wellington, in which each work is fully described and in many instances reproduced. But what a wealth of pictorial art is to be seen hanging on the walls of the gallery alone may be imagined when I state that Leonardo da Vinci, with a "Virgin and Child"; Claude with two landscapes of great beauty; Carlo Cignani, with a "Venus and Adonis"; Parmegiano with a "Marriage of St. Catherine"; Carlo Dolci, with an "Ecce Homo," and Guercino with a "Mars," are all represented. Then there is a battle piece full of action by Salvator Rosa, and a delightful "Holy Family," by Sassoferrato; as well as a "Virgin and Child" by Guilio Romano, of such power and beauty that Benjamin West once, bracketing it with the lovely Correggio, remarked that they should be framed in diamonds, and that it was worth fighting a battle for them alone!

Besides these, and how many others, the number of splendid examples of the Dutch and Flemish schools is extraordinary. There are the "Holy Family," by Rubens, and a landscape by Johannes Vermeer; Vandyck's "Magdalen with Angels"; and "The Colbert Family on Horseback," by Van der Meulen; a pair of Wouvermans, one, "The Return from the Chase," and the other "The Departure of a Hawking Party," both very fine examples, and "A Grey Horse and Cavalier," by Cuyp, which the Duke bought from the Lapeyrière collection in 1817, and which was exhibited at the British Institution in the following year, and in the Old Masters as recently as 1890; Breughel's "Travellers Crossing a

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Ford," and "A Man's Head," by Ferdinand Bol; while besides these are examples of the work of Van der Neer, from the Royal Spanish collection, and not this time one of his usual moonlight effects, but "Boys with a Trapped Bird"; Terborch with the "Signing the Peace of Westphalia," which curiously enough used to hang in the very room in which the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1814, having once belonged to Talleyrand; Pölenburg; David Teniers, both the elder and the younger, of whom there are several examples; Duyster, Pieter Gysels, and Elsheimer, while there is one English picture, in this case one of Sir Joshua's rare landscapes, "The Flight into Egypt," which came from the Northwich collection, in 1859.

In what is called the Piccadilly Drawing-Room—the apartment with its windows over the porch facing Piccadilly, hang a number of Teniers. One of these pictures is small, being only ten inches broad by six inches in height, and yet within that tiny compass no less than thirty figures, painted with the delicacy of a miniature, are hit off with a *verve* and spirit that Meissonier, who so powerfully combined breadth and finish, might have envied. The picture bears the date of 1655, and Waagen is my authority for stating that it was purchased at the sale of the Lapeyrière collection, in 1817, for 5550 francs.

This room might well be called the Dutch Room, for nearly all the pictures in it had their origin in the land of dykes. For instance there is Backhuysen's "Embarkation of De Ruyter," which the Duke purchased from the Le Rouge collection, in 1818, and for which he paid £880; and Brouwer's "Boers Smoking," another of Wellington's purchases, having been bought at the Lapeyrière sale for £96, on which occasion, among many other purchases, the Duke secured Ostade's "Game of Gallet," for £218; and Mieris's "Cavaliers Drinking," for £100.

Of the two Van der Heydens, that representing a view on the Vecht, a particularly fine work, cost but £216 in the Le Rouge sale, and Nicholas Maes's "The Listener," so full of expression, and so consummate in the management of its black and red harmonies, was actually secured at the same time for £64!

There are three Jan Steens in this room; one of them, the famous "Sick Lady," came from the Lapeyrière collection, and was extraordinarily cheap at the £456 which the Duke gave for it; while Gaspar Netscher's "The Toilet," if it can be believed, cost but £36 at the same dispersal. Besides these, there are Van der Velde's "Vessels in a Calm," and Abraham Storck's "Ships in a River"; a hunting scene by Paul Bril, and a landscape with St. Hubert, by the same painter; as well as a pair of Linglebach's landscapes; and the "Rape of Proserpine," by Nicholas

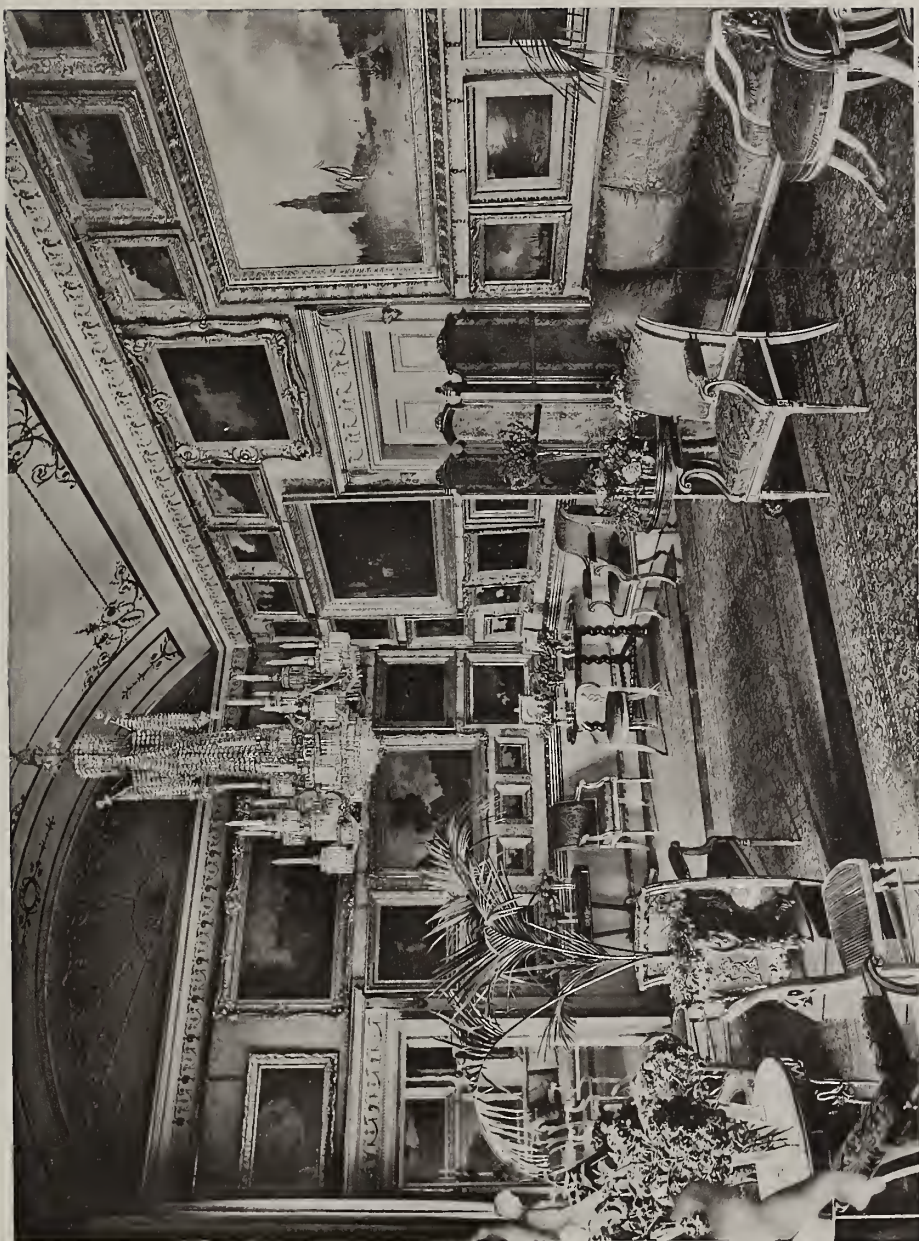


Photo H. N. King.

THE PICCADILLY ROOM, APSLEY HOUSE.

Verkolie, the son of Jan Verkolie, and a Van Huysum; which was once in the Le Rouge Gallery; while examples are here of the work of Karl du Jardin and De Hoogh; Dietrich, and Moucheron.

The library contains a rather indifferent picture of the once celebrated lion tamer, Van Amburgh in his cage, by Landseer, of which Waagen, although he says the animals are executed in a masterly manner, justly criticises the theatrical and common presentment of Van Amburgh, as "by no means doing credit to his kind,"¹ and in the Portico Room hangs the well-known "Chelsea Pensioners" of Wilkie. This masterly and characteristic work, with its varied expressions of interest, excitement, and humour, was painted for the Duke in 1822; the great man paying the price agreed on—1200 guineas in bank notes. Haydon prints the letter in which Wilkie describes the visit of the Duke to his studio on August 17, 1816, in company with several friends. "At last," says the artist, "Lady Argyle began to tell me that the Duke wished me to paint him a picture, and was explaining what the subject was, when the Duke, who was at that time seated on a chair and looking at one of the pictures that happened to be on the ground, turned to us, and swinging back upon the chair turned up his lively eye to me and said that the subject should be a parcel of old soldiers assembled together on their seats at the door of a public-house, chewing tobacco and talking over their old stories. He thought they might be in any uniform, and that it should be at some public-house in the King's Road, Chelsea." With some further suggestions, from which Wilkie told the Duke a beautiful picture ought to be evolved, the great man left the studio, and the chair he had sat on was immediately singled out and decorated with ribbons by the painter's proud family.

In the same room at Apsley House is also to be seen the picture by Burnet, for which the Duke paid the painter 500 guineas, and which was executed as a companion to the "Chelsea Pensioners"; it represents "Greenwich Pensioners receiving the News of the Battle of Trafalgar"; while here also hang a portrait of Pitt by Hoppner; Lady Lyndhurst, by Wilkie; Spencer Percival, by Joseph; and a portrait of Reynolds by himself; besides which are examples of Murillo and Albano; Annibale Caracci and Andrea del Sarto; Wouwermans and Watteau, so that a note of catholicity is struck here, as in nearly all the rooms in the mansion.

Another room—named, from the prevailing tone of its decoration, the Small Yellow Drawing Room—contains one or two pictures of intrinsic interest rather than of artistic worth; although when I state that one

¹ The Duke is said to have suggested this picture, and to have read to the painter the verse in Genesis in which dominion is given to Adam over the beasts of the field.

of them is Wilkie's portrait of William IV., painted in 1833, and presented to the Duke by the King, it will be recognised that one of them at least cannot be said to wholly lack value as a work of art. This picture, which shows us the King habited in the uniform of the Grenadier Guards, was exhibited at the Royal Academy, and although attracting attention was somewhat thrown into the shade by the same painter's remarkable presentment of the Duke of Sussex, which was at the time described as "the first of all modern portraits for truth and character and harmonious brightness of colour."¹

Among other works in this room, there is an elaborate and curious picture of the "Animals entering the Ark," by Breughal and Van Kessel; and the well-known and much engraved "Illicit Still," by Landseer; as well as the same painter's picture of Napoleon's famous charger, "Moscow," and a number of military scenes by De Fontaine, one of which represents Napoleon crossing the Danube before the battle of Essling. An incident in one of Wellington's campaigns is also represented here, in T. J. Barker's picture of the Duke writing for reinforcements at the Bridge of Sauron. For the rest there are a number of portraits hanging in this apartment, among which are two of Napoleon by Lefèvre, two of Josephine by the same painter, and one of the great Duke himself.

A large picture of George IV., by Wilkie, represents the King in Highland dress; "a very stately figure, of astonishing force and effect of colour," is Waagen's comment. This portrait was presented by the monarch to the Duke, and used formerly to hang in the Small Drawing Room, but is now in the Dining Room in company with presentments of Francis II. of Austria, William III. of Prussia, and William I. of Holland; Louis XVIII., and Alexander I. of Russia, both by Baron Gérard, among others most of which were either painted for the Duke, or presented to him by the various sovereigns, the safety of whose kingdoms and the perpetuation of whose lines as reigning families, he did so much to secure.

Although not of course artistically interesting, yet having a certain value of their own, if only to show that the great Duke appreciated art in its most perfect form, and must have exercised much self-restraint in refraining from carrying away many masterpieces which his rôle as conqueror placed at his disposal, are the four copies of Raphael's works, "The Spasimo," "La Madonna del Pesce," "The Pearl," and "The Visitation," hanging in Apsley House, which Wellington commissioned Bonnemaïson to reproduce while they were in Paris. They

¹ "Sir David Wilkie," by Mollett.

are interesting copies of these celebrated pictures, but hardly of the artistic excellence of another copy at Apsley House, that of the "Madonna della Sedia," which is readily understandable when we know that in this case the copyist is supposed to have been no less a master than Guilio Romano.

The portraits at Apsley House are generally interesting, rather from the individuals represented than from the fame of their painters, although in several cases there is a satisfactory combination of both attractions. Here is John, Duke of Marlborough, solemnly hanging in the house of the commander who rivalled him in military glory, and far out-distanced him in integrity; here is Pitt—the greater son of a great father—who did so much to make many of those victories possible and to further enhance that military glory; and here is Mr. Arbuthnot, the lifelong friend of the Duke, who died at Apsley House in apartments especially assigned to him by his old friend; when one looks at that portrait it is difficult to forget the pathetic anxiety of the Duke during Mr. Arbuthnot's last illness, and the occasion when the doctor had uttered the patient's doom, and the great Duke, almost breaking down, seized his hand and gazing into his face exclaimed: "No, no; he's not very ill, not very bad—he'll get better. It's only his stomach that's out of order. He'll not die."¹

Here, too, we have Elizabeth, Duchess of Wellington, painted by Gambardella; while many of Wellington's comrades in arms are, of course, represented; Lord Beresford, Lord Lynedoch, and Lord Anglesey, all perpetuated by the brush of Lawrence; Blucher is here in the city he would, *mutatis mutandis*, have liked to sack; and Alava, who fought under the Duke in the Peninsular War, and was afterwards Ambassador in London; so is Soult whom Wellington met under such varied circumstances; and Pope Pius VII., whom Napoleon ordered from Rome to crown him, and at the crucial moment snatched the imperial diadem from the trembling pontiff's hands, and put it on himself.

Beechey painted the portrait of Nelson which is here. We all know the story of how the great sea-captain and the hero of a hundred fights met once—in Pitt's waiting-room—and did not know each other! Lord Castlereagh, who committed suicide and drew down some of Shelley's most bitter invectives, and who was said to have been the most noticeable figure at the Congress of Vienna, because he was the only diplomatist present who wore no orders, may also be seen; as may Spencer Perceval, whom Bellingham did to death in the lobby of the House; and here, too, is Colonel Gurwood, who edited the despatches of the Duke—those

¹ Gleig.

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extraordinary examples of military knowledge, patient industry, and untiring activity.

Most of these portraits hang in the Yellow Drawing Room, and with them are many others of "Wellington's men," mostly from the brush of Pieneman, such as Sir John Elley, Ponsonby, and Sir Colin Campbell, the last being the original sketch for the figure in the large Waterloo picture now at Amsterdam, and signed "J. W. P., Apsley House, 1821"; Viscount Hill and Lord E. Somerset; Lord Seaton and Lord Raglan; General Fremantle and Sir Colin Halkett; Sir George Cooke and Col. Thornhill; while there is a fine portrait of Lord Combermere by Hayter; Joseph Bonaparte by Baron Gérard; and the Duke himself by Gambardella, a copy of Lawrence's picture, and also by C. R. Leslie. And, appropriately in the midst of this military picture-gallery, hangs Sir W. Allan's "Waterloo," representing the field as it appeared at 7.30 P.M., when Napoleon made his last desperate effort to retrieve his falling fortunes and Ney, bravest of the brave, led on foot the Old Guard to their last fruitless attack, of which picture the Duke once remarked: "Good—very good—not too much smoke."

Some family portraits hang in the Lower Drawing Room, including a particularly fine one of the first Lord Cowley by Hoppner; Lawrence's Lady Wellesley, and Lady Worcester, and Hoppner's well-known group of Lady Anne Fitzroy, afterwards Lady Anne Culling-Smith, with her two daughters, Anne Caroline and Georgina Fredericka Fitzroy, who was afterwards the Lady Worcester of Lawrence's picture.

But it is not only in the Reception Rooms that this wealth of pictorial art is to be seen; for on the Staircase, in the Vestibule, the Corridor, the Entrance Halls, even in the Basement, a number of works hang in bewildering profusion; battle pieces by Courtois; *genre* pictures by Peter de Hoogh, and Caravaggio, ("The Gamblers," once belonging to Joseph Bonaparte); Haydon's heroic sketch of the Duke when in his seventy-first year, and, particularly noticeable, Jan Steen's remarkable "Egg Dance," which Wellington purchased at the Le Rouge sale, in 1818, for £120!

Among these contemporaries we find here and there older historical figures; Henri Quatre, with his pleasant face—one wonders whether thinking of his ideal peasant with his chicken in the pot, or of the beautiful eyes of Gabrielle d'Estrées; the Prince de Condé, Rocroi hovering in our thoughts, and Louis XIV.'s royal word, "Don't hurry, cousin; when one is laden with laurels one cannot walk fast"; and the "Roi Soleil" himself in all the glory of robe and wig which Thackeray so wickedly stripped from him to present us with a little, bald-headed, weak-kneed old man, hobbling with a stick. Here, too, is another

Bourbon, who owed so much—his kingdom, perhaps his life—to the Duke—Charles X., the once gay Comte d'Artois of Louis Seize's court. This is the picture which, as he once gazed at it, gave occasion for Wellington to compare its subject with our James II. ; "when one reads Mazure's book, one is much struck at the many points of likeness," he told Lord Stanhope, "and yet what is very curious is—and I know it for a positive fact—that they ordered the book to be written on purpose to show that there was no likeness at all."¹ Other portraits of the various monarchs of Europe who all owed something to the Duke are here, and half-a-dozen of the colossus—Napoleon—he overthrew.

In the Library, nearly all the wall-space of which is covered by book-cases containing many of the works that the great Duke was wont to consult, there still stands the oval-topped writing desk at which he sat and penned those short and emphatic notes, or as often sent cheques and bank-notes to deserving cases, part of that splendid generosity of which few knew the extent except, perhaps, Gurwood, who once told Haydon that he saw the great man sealing up envelope after envelope containing money which was to bring joy to many a starving household. Lawrence's portrait of the third Earl Bathurst hangs in the Garden Room, formerly the great Duke's bedroom; in the Dining Room is that of Lady Charlotte Greville by Hoppner, as well as R. Lawrence's sketch of the Duke's famous charger, "Copenhagen," and the "Storming of Seringapatam" by Stothard.

The great English sculptors are perhaps better represented than its painters; for example, there is Steell's bust of Wellington himself; Chantrey's Castlereagh and Wellington; Pitt by Nollekens, as well as busts of Perceval, Ponsonby, Gurwood, &c. Canova is represented by his colossal statue of Napoleon which stands at the foot of the staircase, and which the Prince Regent presented to the Duke, in 1817. Here is that extraordinary man in an apotheosis of glory—crowned with laurel, holding in one hand a sceptre and in the other a figure of victory! Here he stands amidst the *penates* of one who tore victory from his grasp and shattered his dream of dominion! Surely others besides Waagen in viewing this satire on earthly greatness have been "filled for awhile with melancholy thoughts." This remarkable work is eleven feet high, and is said, with the exception of the left arm, to have been cut from a single block of marble, and the sculptor was able to cut a statuette of Hebe from beneath the right arm of the figure! Another example of Canova's work is the bust of Pauline Borghese—that heroine of so many stories—whom the sculptor, it will be remembered, considered the most perfect

¹ *Stanhope's Conversations with Wellington.*

example of beauty in face and figure then alive. Rauch's great statue of Blucher at Breslau is here to be seen copied in little; while the same sculptor's bust of the Emperor Nicholas also stands here. Besides which there are a number of antique busts and figures; Marcus Aurelius, and Servianus; Alexander, and Lucius Verus, and Vitellius, to mention but these; and there is also a head of Charles I., which is attributed to Bernini.

Many of the most interesting and valuable artistic treasures preserved at Apsley House, were presents to the great Duke from the various sovereigns of Europe and others who recognised how much their safety and that of their peoples was due to his consummate mastery in the art of war. Thus the magnificent service of Sèvres came from Louis XVIII.—perhaps from so well-known a *gastronome*, a not inappropriate gift; the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia both helped to fill the Duke's China Room with priceless porcelain; the King of Saxony's contribution was a magnificent Dresden dessert service, painted with scenes depicting the Duke's victories in India, the Peninsula, and at Waterloo. The silver plateau which the Regent of Portugal, on behalf of the people of that country, sent to Wellington is no less than thirty feet long by as many wide, and is lighted by 106 wax tapers; while the Corporation of London's gift took the appropriate form of three silver candelabra—each representing a foot soldier life size. Here, too, are to be seen the superb Waterloo vase which the merchants and bankers of London gave the Duke, and more noticeable than all the Wellington shield—a masterpiece of design and execution, which formed a national gift, and was completed in 1822, at a cost of £7000. The work, as is well known, was designed by Stothard, who took Flaxman's shield of Achilles as a general idea for the design. He had but three weeks in which to read up the history of Wellington's campaigns for embodiment in the scheme of the work, and his biographer, Mrs. Bray, well says that “to any other than genius of the highest order, perfected by long practice, the task to be performed in so short a time would have been impossible.” Stothard always thought that, although less costly, a bronze shield would have been a richer and more classical material for his design. The Duke called on the artist and examined his drawings and the etchings he had made from them, and he both carefully analysed each design and made such criticisms as they suggested to him. It is needless to expatiate on the history of these designs, nor shall I give any minute description of the shield, as such descriptions are generally not only tedious but very frequently fail to convey any adequate idea of the subject; but I may at least state generally the nature of Stothard's conception; which was, the Duke on

horseback in the centre, surrounded by his more illustrious officers, Fame crowning the hero, and at his feet Anarchy, Discord, and Tyranny overcome. The arrangement by which the evolutions of the horses within a circle are arranged—all emanating from the centre—is most effective and original. The border of the shield is formed in ten compartments—each representing a salient incident in the Duke's military career. The shield is 3 feet 8 inches in diameter, and the columns which stand by its side, and were designed by Smirke, stand 4 feet 3 inches high.

I must not omit to mention among the more notable presents of which the Duke was the recipient, the two candelabra of Russian porphyry, 12 feet high, given by the Emperor Alexander, and the pair of vases of Swedish porphyry presented by the King of Sweden. But although these rich and beautiful objects cannot fail to have an interest for any one who is either a student of Wellington's career, or a lover of art, it is probable that the chief attractions of Apsley House will be found to centre in the almost humble private apartments of the great Duke, and the Museum where the more personal relics associated with him are preserved. These rooms, in 1853, were thrown open to the public, as remaining then in the exact state in which they were when last used by Wellington in September 1852; and one who then inspected them tells how "the library he consulted, the books he kept beside him for reference, the mass of papers, maps, and documents, even to the latest magazine, were undisturbed." This is the room in which Lord Ellesmere records having often seen the Duke sleeping in his chair amidst a chaos of papers. It was lined with book-cases and despatch-boxes (for we must not forget that if he was Commander-in-Chief, he was also Prime Minister), and there was the red morocco chair in which he worked—and slept, as we have seen; and an upright desk at which he stood to write; on the walls hung the engravings of the Duke—one of these probably that which Lord Ellesmere, writing from memory, thought was in one of the bedrooms, in which Wellington is represented, by a Portuguese artist (it was taken after Talavera) in a Portuguese uniform with hessian boots; the other by Count D'Orsay when he was an old man, and a Cosway drawing of the Countess of Jersey, hanging between medallions of Lady Douro (the Duke's daughter-in-law) and Jenny Lind!

In the Secretary's Room stood an object of great interest; the rough unpainted box, which had been with the Duke in all his campaigns, and on which he had often written those despatches which so forcibly attest the lucidity of his mind, or those military orders which led to so many victories.

The small bedroom, approached by a short passage, contained little

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but his exiguous bedstead curtained with green silk hangings, and practically its sole mural decorations were an unfinished sketch of Lady Douro, a small portrait in oils, and two cheap prints of military men.

In the Museum, which contains many of the articles which have already been mentioned, such as the gifts of foreign sovereigns, the Wellington shield and the great candelabra, are a number of glass-topped cases in which are arranged the swords, batons, and the innumerable orders, belonging to the Duke; more interesting still, perhaps, his two pairs of field glasses, the cloak which he wore in the Peninsula and which is almost as famous as Napoleon's grey coat; a sword which once belonged to Napoleon himself; the dress which Tippoo Sahib was wearing when he was captured; the fine "George" set with diamonds which Queen Anne had given to Marlborough and which George IV. in turn presented to his Marlborough, and innumerable medals struck in honour of the Duke; as well as the identical George which Charles I. gave to Bishop Juxon on the scaffold, to mention but these.

I have particularly laid stress on two essential points of interest in Apsley House; the chief being the memory of the great man with whom it will always be indissolubly connected; the other the superb collection of pictures with which it may be said, without exaggeration, to be filled; but it need hardly be remarked that besides these treasures, every room is not only more or less magnificent in decoration, in the matter of ceilings, mantelpieces, over-doors, &c., but also contains a wealth of beautiful furniture and *bric-à-brac*, which both add to their splendour and interest.¹

In the relatively small grounds at the back of Apsley House, the great Duke was wont to walk, and, like his famous rival, Napoleon, used occasionally to water the shrubs with a hose; and it is interesting to reflect that, perhaps, there were occasions when the great protagonists of Waterloo might each have been employed in "spouting water on the trees and flowers in their favourite gardens,"² at an identical moment.

¹ A *Catalogue Raisonné* of the pictures at Apsley House was published by Mitchell, of Bond Street, while Evelyn, Duchess of Wellington, brought out, some years ago, a magnificent descriptive catalogue, profusely illustrated, in two volumes.

² *Journal of the Captivity of Napoleon.*



Photo H. N. King.

THE GREAT HALL, BRIDGEWATER HOUSE.

CHAPTER VII

BRIDGEWATER HOUSE

IN the second year of the reign of Charles I., Thomas Howard was created Earl of Berkshire, and shortly after that date he commenced the erection of a town house to the north-west of St. James's Palace, his many high offices about the Court probably determining him to select this position, which besides, as overlooking the Green Park, was then as now one of the most desirable in London. The mansion he built was of considerable size, and its ground ran for some way parallel with what is now St. James's Street, extending eastward to the corner of that thoroughfare, and thus facing the better part of St. James's Palace itself.

Besides being the town residence of so important a personage as Lord Berkshire, who I may remind the reader, had married Elizabeth Cecil, the daughter of William, Lord Burleigh, and who was both governor, and later Gentleman of the Bedchamber, to Charles II., the house was connected for a short time with a still more illustrious individual, for, in 1666, Lord Clarendon, who had then left Worcester House, but had not entered into possession of Clarendon House, or Dunkirk House, as the populace was wont to term it, rented Berkshire House for a time. Indeed he was here during a portion of the building of his palace in Piccadilly, and Evelyn notes going to see the Chancellor's new house, on November 28, 1666, and afterwards waiting on Clarendon, "who was now at Berkshire House, since the burning of London"; while Pepys records visiting the house on two consecutive days in the same month; on the second occasion of which, there appears to have been a council held here, for, says the Diarist, the Duke of York was there "and much business done," though he adds "not in proportion to the greatness of the business," which may indeed have been accounted for by his concluding statement (a truly Parthian shot at the great Clarendon) that "my Lord Chancellor was sleeping and snoring the greater part of the time."

It would appear that Lord Berkshire was in the habit of letting the

house on various occasions for, before Lord Clarendon took it, we find it fitted up, in 1664-65, for the reception of the French Ambassador, and Lord Craven residing here two years later. In 1668, however, a scheme was on hand to transfer the property to a very different character, for in that year Charles II. purchased it for Barbara Villiers, notorious both as Countess of Castlemaine and Duchess of Cleveland, and on May 8th, the gossiping Pepys is able to state that she "is to go to Berkshire House, which is taken for her, and they say a Privy Seal is passed for £5000 for it."

That very accommodating gentleman who from plain Roger Palmer, Esq., was elevated into Earl of Castlemaine¹ in 1661, resided here for about a year with the lady who bore his name; but it would appear that he then found it convenient to leave her in sole (though anything but solitary) possession of her new plaything.

Two years later Lady Castlemaine was created Duchess of Cleveland, and this marks the period at which the name of Berkshire House was changed to that of its new mistress. Of this notorious personage perhaps the less said the better; her baneful influence over Charles who, to gratify her caprices and her mania for gambling, impoverished an exchequer that was always at a low ebb; her licentiousness, which compared not unfavourably with that of Messalina or Faustine; her favoured lovers, Jermyn and Churchill, Chatillon and Montagu, Goodman and Hart and Hall, the players, and Fielding the beau; her covetousness and her temper, are these not all written in the diaries and memoirs of the period, and is it not better to leave the unsavoury record in the decent interment of the pages, among others, of Pepys and Evelyn, the latter of whom considered that Cleveland House was "far too good for that infamous ——"?

After a time the Duchess found Cleveland House and its large gardens were unnecessary to her, or perhaps she had been losing heavily at Bassett—one remembers that twenty-five thousand which she is said to have lost in a single evening—and found it impossible to cajole Charles into a further grant; in any case she sold a portion of the ground towards St. James's Street, and several houses were built upon it, one of which was inhabited by the Earl of Nottingham, one of those Finches (he was Daniel, second Earl) whose swarthy complexion gave point to their nickname of the "black funereal finches," presumably after he had sold Nottingham House to William III., in 1691.

On the death of the Duchess, in 1709, Cleveland House passed to

¹ He died in 1705, a little less than a year before the Earl of Berkshire, who lived to over ninety.

her son, Charles Fitzroy, Duke of Cleveland and Southampton who lived here, till his death in 1730. As his son married, in the following year, a daughter of the Lord Nottingham mentioned above, it is probable that the proximity of their parents' homes may have been instrumental in bringing the young people together. The second Duke did not, however, reside at Cleveland House after the death of his father, for on that event taking place, the house was purchased by Scroop Egerton, first Duke of Bridgewater, a forbear of its present owner. He was succeeded in the title and occupancy of the mansion, which was then variously known as Cleveland House and Bridgewater House, by his fourth son, who, however, lived but three years after coming into the title; when his brother Francis Egerton succeeded him, in 1748, and died unmarried in 1803. It was he who, in 1795, made considerable alterations to the house, refacing it, &c., but who is chiefly famous for that remarkable collection of pictures which he brought together and which, at his death, was, even in those days of relatively small prices, valued at £150,000.

The wonderful taste displayed by the third Duke for collecting works of art, would appear, from a paper written by Lord Ellesmere, in the *Quarterly Review* for March 1844, to have had its genesis in the Duke's early associations with Robert Wood, an art critic of no mean order, and an active member of the Society of Dilettanti, being indeed the first director of its archæological ventures.¹ Certain it is that, to quote Lord Ellesmere's words, "dining one day with his nephew, Lord Gower, afterwards Duke of Sutherland, the Duke saw and admired a picture which the latter had picked up a bargain for some £10, at a broker's in the morning. 'You must take me,' he said, 'to that d—d fellow to-morrow.'" If this was the first step in the direction of picture collecting, it was followed up with an assiduity that only the most vital interest, sound judgment, and unlimited means could have rendered possible; for the Duke acquired no less than forty-seven of the finest pictures from that famous gallery of the Duke of Orleans which had once been the wonder and envy of the whole artistic world.²

The noble collection thus formed was left by the Duke, appropriately enough, to that nephew whose taste had first inspired its formation, Earl Gower, who succeeded his father as the second Marquis of Stafford a little over six months after his uncle's death in 1803, and who was created

¹ He accompanied Bouverie and Dawkins, in 1750, on a journey of exploration into Asia Minor, and joined the Society in 1763. He and Dawkins published works on the ruins of Baalbec and Palmyra. He died in 1771.

² I have given a short account of this collection and its vicissitudes in the chapter on Stafford House.

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Duke of Sutherland, thirty years later, only shortly before his own death. During his possession of the collection it was known as the Stafford Gallery, and an elaborately illustrated description of the pictures was published by W. J. Ottley, in four volumes, with that title, in 1818.

A clause in the Duke of Bridgewater's will provided for the reversion of the collection to Lord Stafford's second son, Lord Francis Egerton, who was created Earl of Ellesmere, in 1846, and who it will be remembered had married, in 1822, Harriet Catherine, daughter of Charles Greville, of journal fame. A delightful little biographical notice of Lord Ellesmere, which his daughter, Alice Countess of Stafford, prefixed to his *Reminiscences of the Duke of Wellington*, published in 1903, and which is modestly termed "a brief memoir," is quite sufficient to indicate the charm of his character and the extent of his knowledge, besides incidentally showing that he was a letter-writer of no mean order, possessing the art of vividly depicting scenes and events, and that he had a gift of humour which enabled him, in a letter from Madrid dealing with men and matters of high political import, to gravely conclude with "I have no events to tell, unless it interests you to hear that Sir William a'Court has a swelled face, and that his Secretary's dog has had a severe action with a cat, and was obliged to retreat with the loss of her left eye, which has thrown a damp on the spirits of the embassy"; the latter touch being quite in the Walpolian manner. Lord Ellesmere's love of literature and facility as a linguist are remembered by his translations from Goethe and Schiller, many of whose noble lines he rendered into forcible and easy verse; his ability with the pencil is proved by the sketchbooks filled with the results of his observations in many lands; he was, too, an ardent sportsman; and the additions he made to the famous collection which he had inherited shows that his love of art was hardly less pronounced than that of his father or great-uncle. In 1833 he entered into possession of Bridgewater House; and it was he who, some years later, rebuilt the old mansion. It would appear that there was at first a design to add to the original structure and probably to encase it, but such restoration was found impossible from the fact that dry rot had so penetrated the whole place that nothing short of complete rebuilding was practicable. The work was undertaken, under the superintendence of Sir Charles Barry, and during its progress Lord Ellesmere rented No. 18 Belgrave Square, now the headquarters of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy.

The rebuilding of Bridgewater House occupied many years, but it was practically completed in 1849,¹ as an inscription above the entrance

¹ *The Builder* for October 3, 1849, contained a short account of the rebuilding, together with a ground plan of the mansion.

states. There is no doubt but that the better accommodation of the pictures was the chief reason for this vast work being undertaken. Dr. Waagen was, however, disappointed with the lighting of the gallery, but we must remember, also, that he found fault with the architecture, considering Barry less happy in dealing with the Italian than with the Gothic style; and he even goes so far as to say that "in the taste of the forms and decorations," it is inferior to its "stately neighbour," Stafford House! But, if he is thus adversely critical over the mansion itself, his enthusiasm for the pictorial contents is shown not only by the space he allots to their consideration, but also by the fact, that of all the great private galleries in London, it is that of Bridgewater House which he deals with first after the Royal collection.

Before I attempt to say anything about the pictures and other beautiful contents of the house, I may give a few details as to the building itself. Thus it is nearly a square, the west façade measuring 120 feet, while the south front is about 20 feet longer; and although it has outwardly the appearance of a solid block, the interior is broken by two courts which help to give additional light and air. The rooms are arranged with that regard for personal comfort combined with adaptability to stately functions which is a common attribute to most of the great houses of London. The state apartments are on the first floor, while the great gallery faces north and, indeed, extends the whole length of, and a little beyond, the mansion on that side.

I am confronted with no ordinary difficulty in dealing with this great collection, the adequate description of which would require a large volume. My scheme is not to give a *catalogue raisonné* of the various galleries which are mentioned in this work, neither do I, on the other hand, desire to pass them by with a bald note of subject and painter, for this is what we can find in a guide-book. A plethora of adjectives is also less exhilarating to the reader than to the writer, who when he sets down the words "beautiful," "grand," or "magnificent" connects with those terms the perfect drawing and colouring of some work which they conjure up to his mind's eye. All, I think, therefore, that I can do is to refer generally to some of the most remarkable of the treasures as they hang in the various rooms, and although this method is a tantalising one, and is apt to whet the appetite of the reader, he may solace himself with the consolation that the noble owner is not averse from granting permission to view the gallery, where a proper introduction is forthcoming.

I may here state that the number of pictures in Bridgewater House is over 400, including the 47 from the Orleans Gallery, but excluding 150 original drawings by the Caracci, and 80 by Guilio Romano, which

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the first Earl of Ellesmere purchased in 1836, from the "princely collection," as Smith termed it, of Sir Thomas Lawrence.

The great Hall in the centre of Bridgewater House is surrounded on the first floor by an arcaded corridor, in the Italian style, supported by massive pillars of green scagliola marble, and in this gallery hang works by Nicholas Poussin, and Andrea del Sarto, "the faultless painter," besides productions by lesser masters, as well as some frescoes from Cicero's Villa at Tusculum, and much interesting, but chiefly modern, sculpture.

Poussin is represented by the famous "Seven Sacraments," which were executed at Rome for M. Chantelou, and represent the sacraments according to the Roman Ritual, viz., Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Penance, Ordination, the Last Supper, and Extreme Unction. The painter worked at these subjects twice, the first set being undertaken, about the year 1636, for his patron, the Cavaliere del Pozzo, and are now at Belvoir, having been purchased by the Duke of Rutland on the advice of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Walpole in a letter to Lady Ossory (Dec. 1, 1786) mentions seeing them at Sir Joshua's, and liking them better than when he had before seen them in Rome. "'There are two of Baptism,' says he. Sir Joshua said, 'What could he mean by painting two?' I said, 'I concluded the second was Anabaptism.'"

The set at Bridgewater House are on a larger scale than their predecessors, and the first to be finished (in 1644) was, curiously enough, the last of the series;¹ the "Marriage" being the last painted, and finished four years later. On M. Chantelou's death, the Duke of Orleans bought them for 120,000 francs; and when the Duke's collection was brought to England they were valued at £4900, at which figure the Duke of Bridgewater secured them. Waagen considers that the "Confirmation," "Baptism," and "Marriage," are the most remarkable of them, and although Poussin's mannerisms are noticeable throughout the series, and faults have been pointed out even in the best of these seven pictures, still they may be reckoned as among his greatest works.

There is another Nicholas Poussin here, "Moses Striking the Rock," from the same collection as the "Seven Sacraments," of which Felibien thus speaks: "Il fit pour M. de Gillier, qui était auprès du Mareschal de Crequy, cet excellent ouvrage ou Moyse frappe le Rocher, et qui après avoir été dans les cabinets de M. de L'Isle Sourdiere, du Président de Bellièvre, de M. de Dreux, est aujourd'hui (1688) un des plus considérables tableaux que l'on voye parmi ceux du Marquis de Seignelai." There

¹ On the other hand, Felibien states that the Eucharist, executed in 1644, was the first to be completed, and was the one most esteemed by the painter.



Photo F. Holliger.

TITIAN'S "DIANA AND CALISTO."

can be little doubt but that this canvas is one of the, if not the, finest that Poussin ever produced. It was subsequently among the Orleans pictures, and is fully described by Smith, in his "Catalogue Raisonné," as well as illustrated in Ottley's "Stafford Gallery."

The Andrea del Sarto represents the Holy Family, in a circular form, of which there is an oval replica in the Louvre.

Every apartment in Bridgewater House is so crowded with works of art, that the Picture Gallery can, as a matter of fact, be said to contain but a tithe of the collection, but it is glorified by no less than six "Titians." Of these, perhaps, the finest is the "Diana and Actæon," in which the painter's "Titianus," in gold, may be read on a pillar. This work together with his "Diana and Calisto," which hangs next to it, were painted for Philip II. of Spain,¹ when the artist was but in his seventeenth year, and were afterwards in the collection of Charles I.

It is on these two pictures that Hazlitt pronounces the following emphatic judgment: "As appeals to simple sensations of the human mind, by means of the external attributes of natural objects—as rich, eloquent and harmonious pieces of colouring—these pictures have probably never been surpassed, even by Titian himself. Certainly in England we have nothing else that can compare with them in this particular respect." There is, indeed, no gainsaying the verdict of this great judge.

In the "Three Ages of Life" by Titian, we may well recognise, as Kugler says, "one of the most beautiful idyllic groups of modern creation," and with Mrs. Jameson regard it as combining within itself the attributes of two arts—poetry and painting. Surely it was work such as this that inspired that title of "Il divino Tiziano," with which the artist-friend of Popes and Emperors is forever known. Like the two great works by the same master, as well as his *Venus Anadyomene*, which also hangs in the Picture Gallery, and which was known as "*La Vénus à la Coquille*" before it came into Lord Ellesmere's possession, this picture was among those purchased from the Orleans collection. It was painted at an early period of the artist's life, for Giovanni di Castelli, and reflects the influence of Giorgione whom Titian then took for his exemplar; indeed, Waagen states that another rendering of the same subject which once belonged to Queen Christina of Sweden, was for long attributed to that master. But the critic would seem to be speaking of this identical picture, for, according to Mrs. Jameson, and the private catalogue of the Bridgewater Gallery, it was this canvas that was purchased by the Queen, from the collection of the Cardinal Augsbourg, for 1000 sequins. At her death it passed into the collection

¹ Vasari's *Historica Pittorica*.

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of the Duke of Bracciano, and thence into that of the Duke of Orleans from whom the Duke of Bridgewater bought it for £600!

Of the pictures by the two Caracci represented in the gallery a noticeable one by Ludovico is "The Descent from the Cross," which was once in the collection of the Duke of Modena, and afterwards in that of the Duke of Orleans, and which cost the Duke of Bridgewater but 400 guineas; while of the four by Annibale, the most important is the "St. Gregory at Prayer," which was painted for Cardinal Salviati, as an altar-piece for San Gregorio, at Rome, whence it was somehow purchased by Mr. Day, at the end of the eighteenth century. A few years later it was publicly exhibited in London, and was bought by Lord Radstock, from whose gallery it passed into that of Lord Stafford, whence it came into the Bridgewater House collection. It is interesting to know that a pious fraud was perpetrated in order to get it secretly out of Italy, which was effected by painting over it, in water colour, a copy of a picture by Guido Reni. Another noticeable Annibale Caracci is "The Virgin and Child, with St. Francis," once in the collection of M. de Launoy, and later one of the Orleans pictures.

Of the fine works by Tintoretto in the collection, four, including "The Entombment," hang in the gallery. This work was formerly at Madrid whence it passed to the Orleans Gallery, being purchased by the Duke of Bridgewater for 600 guineas. It is said, by Mrs. Jameson, that there was formerly an angel in the upper part of the picture, but that the canvas has been cut down for some reason or other. Not far off hangs also the same master's "Presentation in the Temple," from the Orleans Gallery; his portrait of a gentleman holding a book, from the same collection; and another portrait of a Venetian nobleman, dated 1583, which has, however, also been ascribed to Marietta Tintoretto, the daughter of the great Jacopo.

Salvator Rosa is represented in the gallery by his "Jacob Watering his Flock." This was one of the works which Sir Paul Methuen purchased in Italy, on behalf of the Duke of Bridgewater; but the pigments have turned so black that the picture has lost what of original charm and beauty it may have possessed. It is signed "Rosa," and was engraved in the "Stafford Gallery." Two other works by the same painter hang respectively on the staircase, and in one of the sitting-rooms; the first being "A Riposo," a signed picture of remarkable power, which was added to the collection by the Earl of Ellesmere; and "A View in a Wild and Mountainous Country," once belonging to the Duc de Praslin, and formerly known as "Les Augures."

A Rembrandt in the Picture Gallery represents Hannah and the

child Samuel, according, at least, to Michel who ought to know, although this attribution of subject I have elsewhere seen described as "absurd," on the ground that the picture merely indicates a child praying at an old woman's¹ knee, and it has been variously called "Samuel and Eli," "The Mother and Child," &c. This small and exquisite picture measures but $17\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $13\frac{3}{8}$ in. and is signed, and dated 1648. It has been in the De Flines, De Roore, and Julienne collections before finding its present resting-place. The beauty of the execution and the delicacy of the chiaroscuro have been recorded by Rembrandt's biographers, and although the colour has somewhat deteriorated, it is worthy of the year in which the master produced the Pacification of Holland, at Rotterdam, and the perfect "Supper at Emmaus" which hangs in the Louvre.

Of the six examples of Rembrandt, in Bridgewater House, three besides the one just referred to, hang in the gallery; one, a study for the portrait of a man, is described by Smith; another, a portrait of the painter himself, signed, and dated 1659, formerly belonged to Lady Holderness, at whose sale it was purchased in 1802; while the third, an earlier work, said to have been painted in 1632, represents the portrait of a lady, and was once in the collection of the Comte de Merle, and M. Destouches.

Concerning the wonderful assemblage of works by the Dutch masters that adds to the catholicity of the Picture Gallery, it is obviously impossible to speak in any detail; here is Ostade's "Lawyer in his Study," the figure of the man of law being the same as that introduced into another work by the same painter representing a lawyer perusing a document while his client stands by holding in his hand an acceptable present of game, a picture signed and dated 1671, and formerly in the Fagel gallery; here is a superb Metsu, a "Mounted Cavalier" halting at the door of a mansion and receiving a glass of wine from the lady of the house, which Smith describes fully in his Catalogue Raisonné, and which was formerly in the Lubbeling, and Wretsou collections; here, too, is the well known, and much engraved portrait of the artist in his study, playing on the violin, by Gerard Dou, dated 1637, and probably one of the finest examples of the master in existence. Spiering, the Swedish Ambassador, purchased this picture from the artist and presented it to Christina, Queen of Sweden, who, however, in 1654, returned it to the donor, in whose collection Sandrart saw it; later, it was for many years in the possession of the family of Mr. Ladbroke, of Portland Place; and lastly, for I must unfortunately stop somewhere, here is an "Interior of a Cottage" by a master little known

¹ Not improbably the painter's mother.

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in this country, though highly thought of in his own, Cornelis Bega, executed with a degree of finish that is rather akin to the enamels of Petitot than to the more stubborn medium of oil painting. Bega was Ostade's ablest pupil, and if not his equal in breadth certainly his superior in finish, his work recalling the achievements in minute detail painting, of such men as Metsu and Mieris.

In the North Drawing Room is an example of a rare master—Ary de Voys, representing a young man with a book, signed A de Voys F. The name of this painter will be unfamiliar, I suspect, to many even of those whose excursions into the study of art are something more than merely superficial. Ary de Voys, or Vois, born at Leyden in 1641, appears to have been of an impressionable temperament, for he is known to have copied in turn the manner of Knuffer, Tempel, and Slingelandt, as he afterwards did that of Poelenberg, Brouwer, and Teniers. By a marriage with an heiress he seemed likely to lose what chance of fame he already possessed, but after three years of idleness, he returned to his former studious habits without any deterioration being perceptible in his work which generally represented stories from the mythology; although he not infrequently painted portraits, and what were termed "conversation pieces." His pictures sold at high prices and there was a great demand for them, but he appears to have been somewhat indolent during his later years, which accounts for the scarcity of his productions. He died, in his native town, in 1698.

Among other pictures of the Dutch school which hang in the North Drawing Room, there is a beautiful little Terburg—"Paternal Instruction," which has passed through various well-known collections, such as the Lubbeling, Beaujon, Proley, and Wharnccliffe; a David Tenier—a highly characteristic, full and joyous canvas; one of Van de Heyden's views of a "Town in Holland"; and a Mieris, representing a lady seated at her toilet—one of those works whose executive skill would seem almost superhuman, were there anything beyond mere marvellous technique in this painter's productions.

Ostade, Gerard Dou, Van der Neer, Swanevelt, Jan Both, Netscher, Metsu, and Berghem are also represented in this room, and here may also be seen in a strange conjunction, Murillo and Hogarth, Velasquez, Pietro da Cortona, and Sassoperrato! The Pietro da Cortona, "Shepherds Adoring the Infant Christ," is curious as being painted on slate; while a somewhat similar picture to Sassoperrato's "Head of a Madonna," but showing the hands, which that at Bridgewater House does not, is in the National Gallery. The Hogarth and two of the Velasquez (for there



Photo F. Hollger.

MEN PLAYING AT TRIC TRAC, BY OSTADE.

are three in this room) represent portraits of the painters themselves ; the third composition of the great Spaniard is a portrait of a natural son of the famous minister the Duke d'Olivarez, whose story is told by Le Sage at the conclusion of *Gil Blas*, as readers of that amusing work will remember. The picture was purchased by the Earl of Ellesmere from the collection of the Count Altamira.

The first room (The Sitting Room) we enter on the ground floor has the unique distinction among the apartments of the great London houses of containing no less than four works by Raphael. Let us loiter a moment before each of them before turning to the other treasures with which the room is filled.

Perhaps the most fascinating is the circular picture known as "La Vierge au Palmier," which dates from the master's Florentine period, and is traditionally supposed to have been executed for Taddeo Gaddi, in 1506. Muntz brackets it with the "Holy Family with the Lamb," at Madrid, as departing from the earlier methods of the painter when depicting the Virgin ; "while," adds this authority, "it has all the Florentine charm, it has also the gravity which marks the Madonna of the Roman period," and he points out that Joseph instead of being subordinated is brought into prominence by being made a principal figure in the group, as he presents to the infant Jesus the flowers which he has just picked. There is a curious story told of this work—indeed the Duke of Orleans, its former possessor, is said to have related it to Lord Stafford himself. It appears that the picture before becoming the property of the Duke of Orleans, had been left to two old ladies, who could neither of them decide to let the other have entire possession of it, and if it can be believed, they actually cut the picture in half ! The two pieces, luckily, came together again, and Hazlitt states that the join may still be distinguished "passing from the bottom of the picture right through the body of the child, and close to the forehead of the Virgin." The work subsequently came into the hands of the Count de Chiverni, from whom it passed to the Marquis d'Aumont. Later it was sold to M. de la Noue for 5000 francs, the purchaser also being obliged to furnish the Marquis with a copy by Philippe de Champagne. At a still later date it was in the galleries successively of Tambonneau and M. de Vanolles, from the latter of whom the Duke of Orleans purchased it. The valuation set on it when bought by the Duke of Bridgewater, among the Orleans pictures, was £1200 !

Another Raphael, known as the "Bridgewater Madonna," also from the Orleans collection, hangs, as Hazlitt said it always ought to do, close

to the "Vierge au Palmier," "so sweetly do they set off and illustrate each other." A curious thing is that both the Virgin and Child in each picture have identically the same faces, although executed at different periods, by which it would seem that the same models were used, or that one of the works must have been painted, so far at least as the faces were concerned, from the other. The latter seems the more probable solution, especially as there exist several versions of the "Vierge au Palmier," which were apparently copied at the same time. This picture, while in the Orleans possession, was subjected to the hazardous operation of transference from panel to canvas, which no doubt accounts for its somewhat inferior condition. It dates from 1512, and was brought from Italy by Colbert, the son of the great Minister. It passed into the Orleans collection from a M. Ronde, a jeweller, to whom it had been transferred by M. de Montarsis, who had purchased it from the Marquis of Seignelay, the son of Colbert. When the Duke of Bridgewater bought it, its value was estimated at £3000, which, ridiculous as such a sum now appears, is, when compared to the £1200 set against the "Vierge au Palmier," a relatively heavy price.

The third Raphael is a perfect work in the master's best manner. It is called "La Madonna del Passagio," and represents the Holy Family walking in a green landscape. Passavant and Kugler have thrown doubts on the authenticity of this work, and have ascribed it rather to the brush of Francesco Penni; and Waagen agrees with this judgment, although he does not consider it the work of Penni. Hazlitt, on the other hand, goes so far as to regard it "as pure and perfect a specimen as exists of his (Raphael's) finest manner," and Mrs. Jameson concurs with this verdict. What seems to point to its being an original work is the fact that Philip II. of Spain gave it to the Duke of Urbino, who in turn presented it to the Emperor Rudolph II., and we can hardly imagine a mere copy being passed among sovereigns as a valuable present. Then again Gustavus Adolphus made a point of carrying it off from Prague after his capture of that city, to Sweden, and when it passed to his daughter Queen Christina it was generally regarded as, without doubt, a genuine work; and when she abdicated and went to reside at Rome she took it with her. At her death it passed by bequest to her favourite, Azzolini, and it was afterwards purchased by the Duke of Bracciano from whose collection it passed into that of the Regent of Orleans; and subsequently the Duke of Bridgewater bought it for £3000. It has thus a pedigree that should differentiate it from the many copies that are known to have been executed, and which may be seen at Rome, Naples, Milan, and Vienna.

The fourth Raphael, "La Vierge au Linge," is not improbably a replica of the picture in the Louvre; it is so called from the fact that in it appears a white line near the neck, indicating an inner bodice, which does not show in the picture in Paris. It has also been called "The Virgin with the Diadem," and it possesses an extraneous interest from the fact that it was once in the possession of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Raphael dwarfs everything; but even were he not represented so richly, there is, in the Sitting Room alone, material for a small but carefully chosen collection; for here are pictures by the two Caracci, Correggio, Domenichino, Guido Reni, Salvator Rosa, Palma Vecchio, and Luini; to say nothing of the works of lesser masters, which also hang on the walls in bewildering profusion. Annibale Caracci is represented by two canvases; one, "St. John pointing to the Messiah," was originally in the gallery of the Duke of Parma, and passing into that of M. Paillot, came into the hands of the Duke of Orleans; the other, "Christ on the Cross," was painted before the artist went to Rome, and is engraved in the "Stafford Gallery." The Ludovico Caracci, is that painter's copy of Correggio's "Marriage of Saint Catherine," a subject Caracci treated himself in the picture hanging on the staircase; while of the two Correggios, one represents "The Virgin and Child," which, when it hung in the Orleans Gallery, was known as "La Vierge au panier";¹ the other, a "Head of Christ," which was bought by the Earl of Ellesmere from a private collection at Rome, in 1840.

The Claude, which is numbered 101 in the *Liber Veritatis*, and is described by Smith in his *Catalogue Raisonné*, shows one of those pastoral landscapes in which, for tone and atmosphere, the painter excelled all other masters but one. Another landscape, executed, however, in a very different manner, is the view in a wild and mountainous country which Salvator Rosa gives us; the principal feature in which composition is supposed to represent the promontory, known as the Rock of Lisbon, at the mouth of the Tagus.

The two works by Domenichino are "Christ bearing the Cross," which once belonged to Colbert's son, the Marquis de Seigneley, before it passed into the Orleans collection; and "The Vision of St. Francis," which was formerly in the gallery of M. Paillot.

But this enumeration is becoming too much in the nature of a guide book. Let me but point out the beautiful little picture (one of the two here) by Guido; "The Infant Saviour asleep on the Cross," before we take an unwilling leave of this room and its priceless treasures.

¹ This picture has been transferred from panel to canvas. It has also been attributed to Schidone.

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In the Drawing Room hangs a "Portrait of a Venetian Nobleman," by Tintoretto, painted in 1588, and once in the Orleans collection. It was said of this master that sometimes he was as great as Titian, at others less than Tintoretto; as we gaze at this noble conception and note its rich and warm colouring, and its admirable modelling, there will be little doubt, I think, to which of these phases it should be traced.

Here, too, hangs one example of Reynolds; the portrait in question being now generally supposed to be that of Mrs. Trecothick, the wife of Lord Mayor Trecothick, who succeeded the redoubtable Beckford in that office, and whom Sir Joshua painted in 1770-1. When this picture was purchased by Lord Ellesmere, it was, however, supposed to represent Lady Montague. Though what Lady Montague, I don't know, seeing that Reynolds only painted Lady Caroline Montagu as a child, and Ladies Elizabeth and Henrietta Montagu together in a group, and so far as I can gather from his list of sitters no Lady Montague at all.¹

In the same room, besides a number of smaller works by, among others, Gonzales Coques, Paul Bril, Jan Both, Largillière, Hans Holbein, Paul Moreelse, and Van der Velde, and a beautiful picture of a young girl threading a needle, by Nicholas Maes, which I think I would as soon possess as any of the more notable pictures here, there is a remarkable Rembrandt; a "Portrait of a Burgomaster," showing us an old man with a snowy beard, seated in a chair. The picture is signed, and dated 1637, and was formerly in the collection of M. Geldermeester, whence it was bought, by Mr. Bryan, for the Duke of Bridgewater. Two other works, by Dutch masters, at Bridgewater House, are also worth careful attention; Paul Potter's "Cattle in a Meadow," dated 1650; and particularly Cuyp's "View of the Maese near Dort," in which is introduced Maurice, Prince of Orange and his suite, in a boat, on their way to review the Dutch fleet. This beautiful picture came from the Slingelandt collection at Dort, and Waagen says no more than the truth when he exclaims in an ecstasy, that "it looks as if the painter had dipped his brush in light to express the play of the sunbeams, which have dispersed the morning mist upon the waters"; the spectator will, on examining the picture be as astonished as was the critic, at the free and masterly way in which the effects are produced, and particularly the limpid transparency of the water attained. There are other fine examples of Cuyp at Bridgewater House, but they have not that something which goes to make the "View of the Maese" a work of genius.

I have mentioned one Reynolds in this collection; two other works by the same great master hang in the State Drawing Room, one of these

¹ See Leslie and Taylor's *Life of Sir Joshua*.



Photo F. Hollier.

VIEW OF THE MAESE NEAR DORT, BY CUYP.

represents Lord and Lady Clive, with a child and a Hindoo nurse. Leslie states that this picture was painted in 1786, and in Sir Joshua's list of sitters, Lady Clive is given as sitting in the May of that year, but I cannot find, curiously enough, any mention of the great pro-consul's visits to Leicester Square. Waagen speaking of this work remarks that it is one "of those pictures by this great master which combine a lovely conception with a subdued and transparent colouring and careful execution." The other Sir Joshua is merely a sketch for the picture of Mrs. Richard Hoare and her son, now in the Wallace Collection.

The work of another, but relatively little known, great English portrait-painter hangs also in this room; the portrait of the poet Cleveland, by Dobson, in which this fine draughtsman and colourist approaches as near to Vandyck as Tintoretto sometimes did to Titian. If Dobson is little known, the poet whom he has here immortalised is hardly known at all, yet the latter was a man of action as well as a votary of the muses, and defended with his sword the royalist cause which he celebrated by his pen; indeed at Newark his time seems to have been divided between this martial activity and production of satires on the Parliamentary party, although when subsequently imprisoned at Yarmouth, Cromwell heaped coals of fire on his head by ordering his release. He died two years before the Restoration, and his poems were not collected and published till a year after that event.

Among other painters, examples of whose work hang in this room, are Dahl, whose portrait, once said to be of Lady Elizabeth, wife of Scrope, fourth Earl and later first Duke, of Bridgewater, is now supposed more probably to portray the daughter of the Earl, who later married the third Duke of Bedford; Lely with portraits of the Countess of Middlesex, and Lady Elizabeth, daughter of James, Earl of Middlesex, who became the wife of the third Duke of Bridgewater; and Raphael Mengs with his fine portrait of that Robert Wood whom I have before mentioned as advising the Duke of Bridgewater on his purchases of pictures, and who accompanied his grace during his Italian travels. Sir George Hayter's presentment of Francis, first Earl of Ellesmere, also hangs here, as does Lord Leighton's portrait of Lady Charlotte Greville; while the well-known and much engraved picture by Paul Delaroche of the soldiers of the Parliament insulting Charles I. after his trial, is one of the few modern paintings in the house.

In the State Drawing Room hang two fine Claude's—"Demosthenes on the Sea Shore," engaged in his traditional training as an orator by trying to make his voice heard above the rolling billows; and "Moses and the Burning Bush," in which the landscape is, as usual with Claude, the

dominating note. The former of these pictures (No. 161 of the *Liber Veritatis*) was painted in 1664, for M. de Bourlemont, and together with the latter, came into the possession of Mr. Clarke, then of the Hon. Edward Bouverie, from whom the two works were purchased by the Duke of Bridgewater. There is also a beautiful example of Cuyp in this room, where, in a large landscape, cows, horses, ducks and geese are scattered about, and a woman milks a cow beneath the shadow of some trees; and here, too, hangs the only Turner in the collection, a seascape with fishing-boats in a squall, a picture painted, it is said, in direct rivalry with Van de Velde's "Rising of the Gale," formerly in the Baeker, Van Locquet and Hope collections, which is close by in the same room. Here, also, is a portrait of a Doge of Venice, which has been variously attributed to Palma Vecchio, and to Tintoretto, but which, according to the high authority of Mr. Claude Phillips, should be rather ascribed to the school of Titian, perhaps to Titian himself.

If there is some doubt over the authorship of this fine canvas, there is less over the portrait of Pope Clement VII., which, it is conjectured, was painted by Titian, in 1530, at Bologna, whither the artist had attended the Emperor Charles V. on the occasion of the visit of the latter to the Pope. Waagen passes it by as being too feeble for Titian's brush, and considers it a copy; it has, however, a *provenance* from the Amelot and Orleans collections, and has, by other judges, been ascribed to the great Venetian.

In a small room known as the Small State Drawing Room, there are over twenty pictures of varying merit and as many different schools, hanging on the walls. Bassano is here with a "Last Judgment"; Ludovico Caracci with a "Dream of St. Catherine"; and Annibale with an "Infant St. John," a picture that formerly belonged to M. Nancre before it passed into the Orleans Gallery; a landscape by Domenichino, and a "Bacchus and Satyrs" by Filippo Lauri; and three pictures by Andrea di Salerno, of which the first two were originally the folding wings of a triptych, and were purchased in Naples by the first Earl of Ellesmere; but, perhaps finest of all, a "Cupid shaping his Bow," by Parmigianino, a replica of the picture in the Vienna Gallery, and said to have been executed for the Chevalier Bayard. Mrs. Jameson and Barry are both agreed on the excellence of this work, but Waagen considers it only a moderate example of the master. It was originally in the collection of Queen Christina of Sweden, and later in the Bracciano Gallery, whence, apparently about 1721, it passed into the possession of the Duke of Orleans. It was valued at 700 guineas when the Duke of Bridgewater took over part of the Orleans collection. For the rest, the pictures in this room are chiefly of the Dutch or Flemish schools—Karl du Jardin, Dusart,

Van Lint, Van Huysum, and Berghem being among those painters whose works are here represented.

Other rooms, such as the Library, the Small Library, the Dowager Countess's Rooms, the Ante-Rooms, even the Service Room and the Bedrooms, are full of pictorial works of interest and value, but nothing short of a complete catalogue could avail to adequately describe them.

The Dining Room is reserved exclusively for portraits; here hang William III. and Queen Mary in their robes, life size, by Kneller; Prince Charles Edward and his mother, Clementina Sobieski, by Allan Ramsay; James I., of pacific memory, by Van Somer; and Thomas Weedon, Esq., by John Greenhill, the pupil of Lely who feared him, 'tis said, as a rival; and with these the seated figure of the first Earl of Ellesmere, by Edwin Long, and the portrait of the present holder of the title, by Rudolph Lehmann.

I have entered somewhat minutely into the subject of the pictures in Bridgewater House, because they form, admittedly, one of the two or three finest collections in London, but I despair of giving anything but the baldest idea of the wealth of pictorial art assembled within these walls, which would require a volume to do it adequate justice; but perhaps some idea of the extent of the collection, as well as its remarkable range, covering practically all schools from Raphael's day downwards, may be gathered from the enumeration here of a relatively few of its wonderful treasures.

As in all such great houses, the wealth of decorative objects (other than pictures)—beautiful furniture, china, and that collection of artistic trifles which, for want of an appropriate English word, we call *bric-à-brac*—is on the same scale of beauty and value as are the canvases that look down upon them. All this must be taken for granted by the reader, who would hardly thank me were I to give an exhaustive list, where Louis Quinze and Louis Seize, Sheraton and Hepplewhite and Chippendale should jostle Sèvres and Chelsea, Worcester and Capo di Monte, and where I fear it would be a case of not being able to see the wood because of the trees.

But besides these treasures, the library of rare books is one of the most important private collections in London, being particularly rich in Elizabethan and Jacobean literature, and containing the famous four folio Shakespeares, besides the remarkable Ellesmere Chaucer, as well as illuminated missals and historical MSS. of priceless value. In addition to this fine assemblage, there is also preserved here a very remarkable collection of coins comprising several specimens which are not to be

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found in the British Museum ; so that from every point of view, whether we consider the architectural beauty of the house and its internal decoration, the famous pictures that hang on its walls, the rare books and manuscripts and coins that repose in its cabinets, or the beautiful furniture and china that add beauty to its rooms, Bridgewater House may well be called a palace of art.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE DRAWING ROOM, CHESTERFIELD HOUSE.

CHAPTER VIII

CHESTERFIELD HOUSE

CRITICS may disagree, as they have done, as to the permanent value of those letters which the fourth—the great—Earl of Chesterfield addressed to his son; some considering them as enunciating the last word on good manners; others, like Dr. Johnson, regarding them as no less faulty in their inculcation of politeness than vicious in their conception of morals; but few will question the right of their author to be considered “the glass of fashion and the mould of form”—even the great lexicographer, who had no reason to love his lordship, did this—or his claim to consummate taste in those outward *formulae* of life wherein the age in which he lived took so much thought to be perfect, and, at least, succeeded in being decorative.

Chesterfield House remains the most abiding example of Lord Chesterfield's taste in such external things. His courtesy of manner, his elegance of dress, his innate “style,” his excursions into the regions of what may be termed the higher gastronomy, can but be judged by the written records of contemporaries—and there is no lack of them—or from such pictorial representations of him as have come down to us; but his house, over the building and decoration of which he took such infinite pains, still remains to attest the purity of his taste and the splendour of his conceptions. True, various circumstances have combined to rob it of much of its original beauty; its spacious gardens have been cut away and built upon; it has become, on other sides, surrounded by dwellings of less ample proportions, which help to hide its architectural features, but in itself it remains, so far as the main portion is concerned, substantially as it was when Chesterfield first entered into possession and gave that great house warming in 1752, of which Walpole has left us so vivid an account; and within, its character is so little altered that it does not require a great stretch of the imagination to people it with that brilliant throng of the great and beautiful who were used to gather in its rooms or loiter beneath its “canonical pillars.”

When, in the year 1750, E. J. Eyre produced a view of Chesterfield

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House, engraved by J. S. Muller, the mansion had but recently been completed,¹ and by this picture we can see how ample were the proportions of the original structure, and can also perceive at a glance how much, both in building and land, has been curtailed from its former fair proportions. To-day it consists of the centre portion together with those colonnades which joined it to the two large, but inelegant, wings shown in Eyre's drawing. These wings are now swallowed up by other residences, and the frontage to South Audley Street is proportionately lessened. The gardens, too, behind the mansion, which are now diminished to vanishing point, then extended indefinitely down Curzon Street; and although to the south there was a row of buildings with the Grosvenor Chapel at the west corner, on the north and east was open ground, giving point to the saying of many of Chesterfield's friends that he had gone to live in the wilds, and to his own remark that he would be obliged to keep a house dog, as he had taken up his residence among thieves and murderers!

Indeed, curious as it may seem to us who now regard this portion of the town as the centre of fashion, Lord Chesterfield was a building pioneer in this spot; but his enterprise was not long in being imitated, for by a map of the parish of St. George's, dated 1787, we can see that streets and houses had even in this short space of time sprung up on all sides of his stately house.

The ground on which Chesterfield House was built was the freehold of Viscount Howe, whose son, the famous naval commander, was created Earl Howe in 1788, and was known among his sailors as "Black Dick"; its architect was Isaac Ware, who published a "Palladio" and lived in Bloomsbury Square, and to whom several buildings in London can be traced.² It seems a little uncertain how long the house was a building, probably about four years; at any rate it was in progress during 1747, for we find Lord Chesterfield writing to Madame de Monconseil, on the 31st July of that year, in the following terms: "Une société aimable est, a la longue, la plus grande douceur de la vie, et elle ne se trouve que dans les capitales. C'est sur ce principe que je me ruine actuellement a bâtir une assez belle maison ici, qui sera finie a la Françoisise avec force sculptures et dorures." On the 13th of August following, Lord Chesterfield writes to his friend Bristowe,³ in these terms: "My house goes on apace, and draws upon me very fast. My colonnade is so fine, that

¹ Among other views and plans of the house is an engraved ground-plan, preserved in the Crace collection.

² Plans of many of these are contained in Ware's *Body of Architecture*.

³ The letters from whence these extracts are taken are now in the possession of Charles E. Gooch, Esq., who has kindly allowed me to make use of them.

to keep the house in countenance, I am obliged to dress the windows of the front with stone, those of the middle floor too with Pediments and Balustrades"; and he adds, "I propose getting into it next Summer, that is, provided the Bailiffs do not get into it before me"; while, in September of the same year, he tells his old friend Dayrolles that his only amusement is the building of his new house, and that even that is attended by one regrettable incident—the expense.

Full of his new plaything, the Earl again writes Bristowe, on December 12th of the same year: "My new house is near opening its doors to receive me; and as soon as the weather shall be warm enough I shall get into the necessary part of it, finishing the rest at my leisure. My eating room, my dressing room, mon Boudoir, and my Library will be completely finished in three months. My court, my Hall and my staircase will really be magnificent. The staircase particularly will form such a scene, as is not in England. The expense will ruin me, but the enjoyment will please me."

But although Lord Chesterfield speaks of being installed in at least a portion of the house in three months, we find him writing again to the same correspondent on February the 9th, 1748, and remarking, "You will find my house very near finished, for I propose being in it in July or August at furthest," and he incidentally indicates that the great building had its adverse critics, for he goes on to say, "I think you will like it, but whether you will dare to own it, I am not sure, considering that the *schola*¹ fulminates so strongly against it."

The delay in the completion of the house was not only probably due to alterations and improvements made by the fastidious Earl as it progressed, but was also increased by "the long continuance of the cold weather," which Chesterfield tells Bristowe, on March the 31st, 1748, "suspended all my work for a great while, and it will be with some inconveniency even that I shall get into my house at Michaelmas; but I will do it"—an assurance he repeats in another letter to his friend on June 21st, although even then he realises that he will only be lodged in part of the rooms as "those of show must stay till next Summer for their final flourish"; and he adds, "one thing however which I must prepare you for, is that my Door will not be painted black." This is a dark saying, and evidently contains some covert allusion, the point of which, at least to me, is anything but clear; unless at that moment the vagaries of fashion ordained this sable adornment for the chief entrance to private dwellings.

On April 1, 1749, Chesterfield is able to write that he is in his house,

¹ One wonders whether this refers to certain adverse architects generally, or to the Society of Dilettanti in particular.

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but even then with the reservation that "it is yet far from finished, and cannot be completely so before Michaelmas next." The Earl appears to have actually taken possession on March 13, 1749, as we know, considerably later than he expected to do, for by a letter to Madame de Monconseil, written in July, 1748, he spoke of being then without a house, having left his old one,¹ and not yet having got into his new one, and he added that in six weeks he hoped to be settled in, whereas we see it was over six months before he took up his residence in his new dwelling.

Although actually getting in he found that the decorations of the various rooms were far from complete; indeed the fact that the house warming did not take place till 1752, goes to prove that the intervening years were occupied in their embellishment. His chief care seems to have been lavished on the boudoir and the library; and they appear to have been the first apartments to be finished, for in March, 1749, he writes to Dayrolles thus: "I have yet finished nothing but my boudoir and my library; the former is the gayest and most cheerful room in London, the latter the best"; indeed this "boudoir," so called on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle of "a non boudare," he tells a friend, seems to have been his pet hobby, and on it he lavished much of his good taste and more of his ready money. Quite in the Walpoleian manner he gives Madame de Monconseil² a description of the room: "La boisure est d'un beau bleu," he writes, "avec beaucoup de sculptures et de dorures; les tapisseries et les chaises sont d'un ouvrage à fleurs au petit-point, d'un dessein magnifique sur un fond blanc; par dessus la cheminée, qui est de Giallo di Sienna, force glaces, sculptures, dorures, et au milieu le portrait d'une très belle femme, peint par la Rosalba." He would have sent his fair friend a like minute description of the rest of the house, but was deterred by the fact that the younger Pliny in attempting such a picture of *his* villa, failed lamentably in conveying an adequate idea of it, and the Earl perhaps rightly thought that he was hardly likely to succeed where the Roman had failed, for he adds aphoristically that "il est de la sagesse de ne pas tenter des choses au dessus de ses forces."

To Bristowe, on September 17, 1747, he refers to the Library, that Library which he afterwards speaks of as being "stuffed with easy chairs and easy books," which he is "finishing as fast as I can"; and he informs his friend that "the ceiling is done and most of the wainscot up. The Book cases go no higher than the dressings of the doors, and my Poets which I hang over them will be in Stucco Allegorical frames

¹ He lived in St. James's Square from 1727 till 1733; and in Grosvenor Square from the latter date till he went to Chesterfield House.

² She presented him with the magnificent *bras de porcelaine*, that used to hang on each side of the mantelpiece.

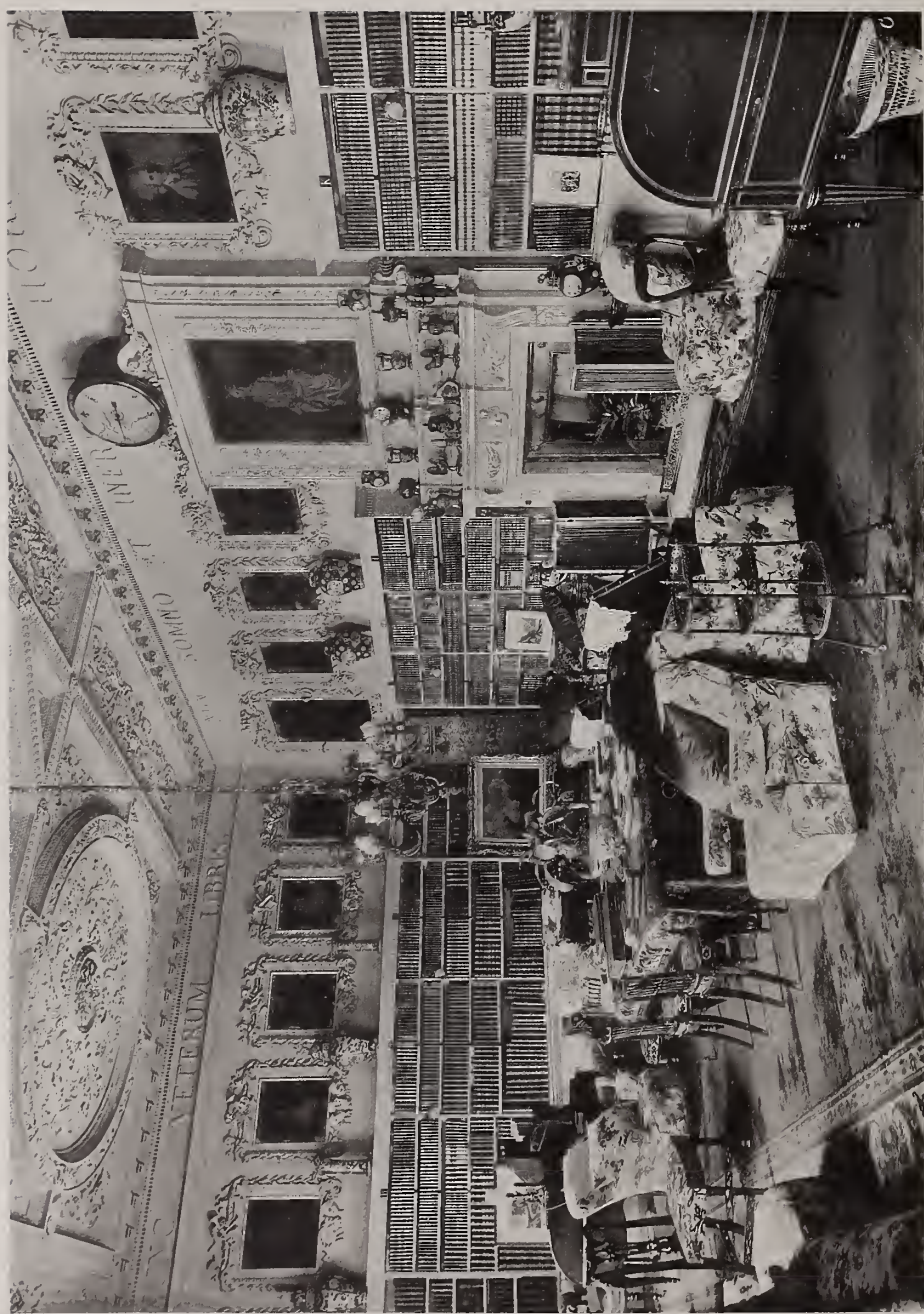


Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE LIBRARY, CHESTERFIELD HOUSE

painted white ; for I have determined to have no gilding at all in it, as the constant fire and candles in that room would so soon turn it black, whereas by having it new painted once in four or five years, it will always be clean and cheerful."

Nothing came amiss to him that might be useful in beautifying his new possession. The magnificent marble staircase described by Vertue as "all of marble, each step made of an entire block and 20 feet in length," was purchased at the sale of the "Princely" Chandos's effects at Canons ; the iron work with its initial C. only having to be altered to the extent of placing an Earl's coronet where a Duke's had been before ; the pillars of the house also had the same *provenance*, for which reason he calls them his "canonical pillars," in a letter to his son. The lantern of gilt copper which Fielding had once celebrated in a ballad in the *Craftsman*, came from Houghton Hall,¹ and furniture and beautiful hangings were picked up in many a Continental capital, where Lord Chesterfield's many friends would be sure to keep their eyes open for likely adornments to his new plaything. *Mutatis mutandis* he was another Walpole, and Chesterfield House an urban Strawberry Hill. But there was this difference ; the London house was filled with beautiful objects because they were beautiful, and decorated throughout in a certain *genre*, that of the French eighteenth century ; whereas Strawberry Hill became a sort of curiosity shop, where much that was rare and curious was cheek by jowl with much that was tawdry and much that was little better than worthless.

The Library at Chesterfield House contained a collection of the "rich and classical stores of literature,"² and although the phrase has rather the air of indicating those books—*biblia à biblia*—as Lamb would have called them, "without which no gentleman's library is complete," yet the well-known taste and attainments of their collector is, I think, a sufficient guarantee that it was such an assemblage of works as might have gladdened the heart of Heber, and not raised a smile of disdain from Beckford.

The Horatian motto which Lord Chesterfield caused to be inscribed round the frieze of the Library was, he told his son, indicative of the life he intended henceforth to lead ; it was taken from the second book of the Satires :

"Nunc veterum libris nunc somno et inertibus horis
Ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ."

"I must observe to you on this occasion," adds the Earl, "that the uninterrupted satisfaction which I expect to find in that library will be chiefly owing to my having employed some part of my life well at your

¹ Walpole to Mann, July 25, 1750.

² *Quarterly Review*, No. 152, p. 484.

age." Lord Chesterfield in these letters was used to "point his moral," both from his own experience as well as from the objects with which he had surrounded himself, and which sometimes engendered, and were sometimes combined in, his train of thought ; and we here find his new possession pressed appropriately into the service as an educational as well as a decorative medium.

The bookcases reached only half-way up the walls, and in the space above them hung the portraits of some of the greatest and, it must be confessed, one of the least, names in English literature. Here was Shakespeare by Zuccherò, flanked by Chaucer, Sidney, Spenser, Ben Jonson, and Milton, down to Addison and Prior, Pope, Swift, and Rowe.¹ Curiously enough, although the prevailing note in the house was a French note, no great writer of that country—not even Molière—relieved the somewhat insular effect of this gallery of literary great ones in the mansion that belonged to one of the most uninsular of Englishmen. Another noticeable room was the Italian Drawing Room, with its glittering chandelier of innumerable lustres, and the marble mantelpiece with its massive caryatids. Each apartment, indeed, had its distinctive feature and its distinguishing note of colour decoration, formed by the beautiful silk hangings of various hues, which had been sent from France, and in many cases specially prepared for this artistic apotheosis. Thus, one room had a large mirror made up of small pieces of glass, the joins being hidden by painted cupids, flowers, and arabesques ; another was noticeable for its girandoles, the candle branches of which were in the form of gilt tasselled ropes. The Music Room had, of course, its organ, on which we may suppose the airs of Handel and Bach to have often trembled ; and its decorations were illustrative of the art of St. Cecilia. In fact, everything in the house showed the taste and judgment and knowledge of its creator, the pride he took in it, and the care he bestowed on its beautification. And nothing proved these qualities better, perhaps, than the pictures which hung on the walls, for here were to be seen examples of the masters of pictorial art—Rubens with his sweeping brush, Titian with his glowing colours, and Vandyke's air of refinement ; the classic landscapes of Poussin, the correct architecture of Canaletto, the trembling saints of Guido, and Salvator's powerful shadows.

But Lord Chesterfield was no indiscriminate purchaser ; indeed he appears to have dealt with pictures as he would with property, and never to have bought anything that was not a bargain. He employed two advisers—one, Sir Luke Schaub, and the other M. Harenc, a Frenchman—

¹ They are now at Bretby, Lord Carnarvon's seat, but the spaces have been filled by other portraits.

to assist him in the selection of works of art, while his friend Dayrolles was commissioned to hunt about for canvases that had a genuine *provenance* and were to be bought cheap. On one occasion we find his lordship writing to the latter in this strain: "*A propos* of money, as I believe it is much wanted by many people even of fashion both in Holland and Flanders, I should think it very likely that many good pictures of Rubens, Teniers, and other Flemish and Dutch masters may be picked up now at reasonable rates"; and he takes the occasion to remind his correspondent of some of the works which he already possesses, such as "a most beautiful landscape by Rubens, and a pretty little piece of Teniers"; but it seems that he now wanted works on a larger scale, probably to fill the ample wall spaces in his new house. "If," he adds, "you could meet with a large capital history or allegorical piece by Rubens, with the figures as big as the life, I could go pretty deep to have it, as also for a large and capital picture of Teniers"; and again he appears to have turned his attention to the Italian school: "I will buy no more till I happen to meet with some capital ones of some of the most eminent old Italian masters, such as Raphael, Guido, Correggio, &c., and in that case I would make an effort." He was once nearly taken in by a Titian, which turned out "an execrable bad copy"; and although, by some loose prior agreement on the part of the vendor, Lord Chesterfield eventually only had to pay the carriage of the painting, it evidently made him particularly careful in the selection of his cheap masterpieces.

It is not difficult to understand that the "*Vanqueur du Monde*," as Johnson, in his celebrated letter, called him, armed with a thousand graces of mind, if not, according to Hervey and others, particularly graceful in appearance,—"*like a stunted giant*," says Ashurst; "*with a head big enough for a Polyphemus*," sneers "*Lord Fanny*,"—surrounded as he was by such treasures, could easily fill his house with the most notable of his contemporaries; but he had a further attraction at command, he was an epicure of the first water, and indeed was one of the earliest to introduce French cookery into this country, and his dinners and suppers were regarded as exhibiting the quintessence of culinary art; as well they might do, when we remember that he engaged as cook—if this plain unvarnished word can be considered sufficient to indicate the powers of so distinguished a gastronomical artist—La Chapelle, who was not only gifted with national genius, but may be said to have had a family claim to it as being descended from that La Chapelle who catered for the more mundane wants of the great Louis Quatorze himself.

Lord Chesterfield set an example which was followed by at least one

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of his descendants, for what La Chapelle did for the palates of the master and guests in the eighteenth century, that did Francatelli and Alexis Soyer for the host and habitués of Chesterfield House in the nineteenth.

One of the chief merits in Chesterfield House, according to its builder, was the fact that it had (as it still has) a spacious courtyard in front, and (which it has no longer) a fine garden at the back—"the finest private garden in London," according to Beckford—attributes, then as now, rarely to be found in town houses. "My garden is now turfed, planed, and sown, and will, in two months more, make a scene of verdure and flowers not common in London,"¹ he complacently writes to Dayrolles in March 1749, in a letter which he dates, as if to give his residence a fuller French flavour, "Hotel Chesterfield"! Here he resided for some twenty years, years that saw the peaceful close of a long life of considerable political activity and more personal pleasure, of which the details need not here be enumerated.²

On March 24, 1773, his old friend Dayrolles called to inquire after him. He found the life of this man of "exquisitely elegant manners" slowly ebbing away. "Give Dayrolles a chair," the dying Peer faintly whispered to his attendant, and in less than an hour he was dead.³ Well might Dr. Warren, who was present, remark that "His good breeding only quits him with his life." But we must remember that in Lord Chesterfield's case, good breeding was not a cloak to be put on and off as occasion required; it was his second nature.⁴

But it was not only his politeness that he preserved to his last breath; his wit accompanied him almost to his grave. Says Walpole, writing to Lady Ossory on March 11 of this same year, "My Lord Chesterfield bought a 'Claude' the other day for four hundred guineas, and a 'Madame de la Vallière' for four. He said, 'Well, if I am laughed at for giving so much for a landscape, at least it must be allowed that I have my woman cheap.'" "Is it not charming," comments Horace, "to be so agreeable quite to the door of one's coffin?"

I think we can see through all the life of Chesterfield one prevailing object: to obtain the regard and admiration of his contemporaries;

¹ Lord Essex, who died in 1839, used to say that as a boy he remembered seeing the old Earl sitting on a rustic seat basking in the sun on the marble terrace that overlooked the gardens at the back of the house.

² For the full account of his career see his *Life* by Ernst, as well as his famous *Letters*; and particularly the work of his latest biographer, Mr. W. H. Craig.

³ He was buried in the burial-ground of Grosvenor Chapel, but his body was afterwards removed to Shelford, in Nottinghamshire.

⁴ Lady Chesterfield, the daughter of a notorious mother, gave herself up to good works, and was a devout follower of Whitfield; when her husband lay dying she brought the Rev. Rowland Hill to his bedside, but the Earl was too deaf, even had he been inclined, to hear his pious exhortations.

indeed, in one of his letters to his son, he says as much, "Call it vanity if you will, and possibly it is so; but my great object was to make every man and every woman love me. I often succeeded; but why? by taking great pains." Hervey, who loved him not, says that he often went so far as to sacrifice his interest to his vanity; this is the verdict of an enemy; a friend would, perhaps, rather see in it a readiness to give up present advantage if by so doing friendship and esteem could be obtained. Like all men in great positions, Lord Chesterfield has been variously judged; old Sarah of Marlborough left him a large sum of money and a magnificent diamond ring as a proof of "the great regard she had for his merit"; and Dr. Johnson wrote him a letter which has become an English classic; and surely to have given the "great Cham of literature" the opportunity of penning such a splendid rejoinder should at least help to wipe away the neglect that inspired it.¹

Chesterfield was, as all the world knows, a wit of the first water, and many are the stories of his good sayings—not as celebrated as George Selwyn's, but often as pointed—which have come down to us. Once his wit took a practical form. In the gallery at Chesterfield House he caused to be hung two figures, one inscribed Adam de Stanhope, the other Eve de Stanhope; could the force of satire go further? As Walpole says, "the ridicule is admirable."²

Among the beautiful women who frequented the assemblies of Lord Chesterfield few, if any, created more excitement and interest than "those goddesses, the Gunnings"; and here it was that the Duke of Hamilton was first seriously attracted by the beauty of the younger of the fair sisters, "at an immense assembly made to show the house which is really magnificent," writes Walpole to Mann. "Duke Hamilton," adds our gossiping chronicler, "made violent love at one end of the room, while he was playing at pharaoh at the other end; that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were of three hundred pounds each: he soon lost a thousand."

Few of the great houses of London have received within their walls a more brilliant assemblage of the distinguished men and beautiful women of their time than Chesterfield House; and although its owner was one who was said to have had no friend, nobody will deny that his acquaintances were drawn from the wittiest and most dazzling society of the day. Here might have been seen that Duke of Newcastle whose ignorance and malapropisms have become a byword; who for nearly thirty years

¹ By-the-bye although there is an ante-chamber in Chesterfield House called "Dr. Johnson's Room," it could hardly have been here, but in Lord Chesterfield's house in Grosvenor Square, that Johnson was repulsed from the door and kept waiting in the outward room.

² Walpole to Mann, September 1, 1750.

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was a Secretary of State, and was astounded at the information that Cape Breton was an island, and wanted to run off and tell the King that "Great Britain is an island"! who was for ten years First Lord of the Treasury, and agreed on one occasion that Annapolis must be defended, but wanted to know where Annapolis was; and Lord Pembroke, who was so devoted to swimming that Chesterfield once addressed a letter to him "in the Thames over against Whitehall";¹ Lord Scarborough, "as worthy a little man as ever was born,"² of whom it was said that he had "judgment without wit, while Chesterfield had wit and no judgment"; Lord Tyrawley, who grew old with his host, and like him outlived most of his contemporaries, so that Chesterfield said wittily, "The fact is, Tyrawley and I have been dead these two years, but we don't choose to have it known." Lord Sandwich, with his "manners of the old court," who, however, disgraced himself at the prosecution of John Wilkes, might have been seen talking to the Gunnings, "the handsomest women alive," the younger of whom married two dukes and was the mother of four; while the elder and better looking was once so mobbed in the Park that the King gave her a guard to protect her from the inquisitiveness of her many admirers; and who once repaid that mark of royal condescension by telling George II. that the only sight she wished to see was a coronation! The Duke of Hamilton who spent lavishly might have been seen cheek by jowl with Lord Bath, whose parsimony was so notorious that he would get wet through rather than hire a coach, and who on one occasion was actually followed into church by a persistent creditor, when the sermon, having for its text "Cursed are they that heap up riches," and the man of wrath pointing to my lord and groaning out, "Oh, Lord," the latter had perforce to leave the sacred building and, we are to suppose, settle the reckoning on one of the grave-stones. Then there was the so-called "Long Sir Thomas Robinson," who once asked Chesterfield to write some verses upon him, and got for his pains this distich:

"Unlike my subject now shall be my song,
It shall be witty, and it shan't be long."

Selwyn, on whom all the good "mots" of the time are fathered; and Walpole, who told such numberless good stories of other people; Dodsley, who published for everybody, and was annoyed by Johnson's famous letter, because he had an interest in the great Dictionary; and David Mallet, who wrote much, but is only remembered by *Rule Britannia*, which he probably never wrote at all.

¹ See *Characters of Eminent Personages of his own Times*, by the late Earl of Chesterfield, 1777.

² *Suffolk Letters*, vol. ii. p. 149.

The list might be interminably extended.¹ *Cui bono?* They are naught but ghosts which people the rooms of Chesterfield House; the inanimate objects that furnish it, alone survive to enable us to conjure up a vanished age. Could they but speak? And what wonderful objects they are! Almost as gorgeous and beautiful as those who gazed upon them, whose robes brushed them carelessly by, whose features were reflected in their dazzling surfaces.

After Lord Chesterfield's death the mansion passed to his cousin Philip Stanhope, who became fifth Earl, and who, dying in 1815, was succeeded by his son the sixth Earl; but about 1850 it was let to the late Duke (then Marquis) of Abercorn, who resided here till 1869, when the property was purchased by Mr. Magniac from Lord Chesterfield, for £150,000. Mr. Magniac proceeded to cut up the extensive gardens, and built Chesterfield Gardens on their site, himself residing at the time in Chesterfield House. By this development, as well as by his subsequent sale of the mansion to Lord Burton, Mr. Magniac must have made a splendid profit out of his investment, but much of the beauty of the house was destroyed; although, luckily, he did not proceed to those extremities evidently feared by a writer in the *Athenæum* at the time, who says: "The Public are hoping that they may be permitted to see the interior of this historical house before the first pick-axe is laid to it."

There are few more beautiful rooms in London than the great Drawing Room at Chesterfield House, certainly not many in which the imagination can run riot to such an extent as here. Its decorations, marvellous arabesques in white and gold, on which French and Italian artists spent their luxuriant fancies; the original crimson flowered-silk hangings in which careful mending is here and there discernible; its magnificent marble mantelpiece, &c., remain as they did practically in the time of the great Earl; and what has since been added by the care and discrimination of the present owner gives just that touch of comfort and homeliness which is more characteristic of our day than it was of those of the earlier Georges, when the great ones of the earth seem always to have existed *en grande tenue*, and to have sacrificed, if indeed they really ever understood, comfort to the exigencies of fashion. Now the magnificently decorated walls and ceiling look not down on an almost empty room, with chairs and settees set formally against the walls, and perhaps a solitary escritoire or commode standing isolated in its vast expanse, but on a room filled with rare French furniture; tables loaded with costly

¹ On one occasion, in 1760, Lord Chesterfield offered the house to the Princess Emily, George III.'s aunt, as a residence.

bric-à-brac ; chairs covered in valuable tapestries which seem to invite familiar intercourse ; cabinets filled with the precious porcelain of Chelsea and Sèvres, whose ornaments have been inspired by Gouthière or Riesener, or whose polished surfaces of oriental lacquer reflect the light like mirrors ; while the superb chandelier is so much in harmony with the room, that one can hardly believe that Lord Chesterfield did not himself place it *in situ* and gaze complacently on its thousand glittering facets.

Much that was here in the time of the "great Earl" has necessarily disappeared ; many objects of interest are at Bretby, the seat of Lord Carnarvon ; others have been scattered far and wide ; but it is probable that few great houses which have passed out of the family that originally owned them have had their intrinsic characteristics so carefully preserved as has Chesterfield House, or where additions and alterations have been necessary have these been carried out with more judicious discrimination or exquisite taste than here. Thus in the famous Library, which, with all the Earl's care, seems, so far at least as the ceiling was concerned, to have been still unfinished at his death, Lord Burton has had the divisions filled with elaborate moulding, which appears exactly of a piece with the original ceiling which still looks down on the State Drawing Room ; again two other rooms have been thrown into one, forming a superb ball-room, such as, in size at least, even Chesterfield never dreamt of ; and where gilding has been introduced into the decorative scheme of some of the ceilings, this has been done with a care, and regard for fitness which is an object-lesson to some restorers who are little better than iconoclasts. But, on the whole, there is a great preponderance of the original work still remaining ; such as the solid mahogany doors, the beautiful marble chimney-pieces, many of the decorated ceilings, and the brocaded hangings, besides the unique grand staircase and the canonical pillars.

Among the contents may also be seen some articles which have been again brought back, after many wanderings, to their original home ; as, for instance, two upright mirrors in elaborately carved and gilded frames, and some chairs, covered with tapestry, on one of which Miss Gunning may have sat when the Duke of Hamilton made violent love to her, and another of which may have been handed to Dayrolles at the dying request of the "Vanqueur du Monde."

And the pictures ! What if the canvases collected by the Earl no longer hang here (fine as some may have been, we know that one or two would hardly bear critical investigation), could they have compared with those that now look from the walls ? In the Dining Room alone are six Gainsboroughs, and what Gainsboroughs ! Here is the Countess of

Sussex and Lady Barbara Yelverton;¹ here that superb pair of portraits of Sir Bate Dudley,² and his wife; the former the notorious Parson-Baronet, who once edited the *Morning Post*, and looks here, with his proud, self-possessed face, as if he felt, as he probably did, capable of ruling the kingdom; Lady Kinnoul (hanging over the fireplace); and full-lengths of Mr. and Mrs. Drummond; while above one of the doors is a charming portrait group by Peters, very similar to the one in the National Gallery.

There are also several remarkably fine Romneys at Chesterfield House; Mary, Lady Beauchamp; the Hon. Mrs. Beresford, a picture engraved by Jones in 1792; "A Beggar Man," exhibited at the Society of Artists in 1771; and one of the innumerable Lady Hamiltons, this time as "Sensibility," engraved by Earlom in 1789; as well as a portrait of Miss Pitt. Besides these, in the large Drawing Room, is the same painter's full-length portrait of Lady Paulet, in a white dress and pale-blue velvet bodice, and wearing one of those large picture hats which Gainsborough first made an artistic accessory; and here, too, is Romney's "Pink Boy," painted probably in rivalry with Gainsborough's more celebrated "Blue Boy."

It is in this splendid room that the great chandelier that formerly belonged to Prince Demidoff, and was afterwards in Lord Dudley's collection, now hangs.

One of the Romneys hangs in the Red Room; but a greater than Romney is here—Sir Joshua, with his "Lesbia"; his Sir George Bowyer, painted between December 1768 and January 1769; and above all his Admiral Keppel, probably executed in 1780, and one of the four or five portraits he painted of his friend, each of which exhibits such individuality of treatment that they can in no sense be considered as mere copies or replicas. Over the mantelpiece in the Library hangs the same master's presentment of Mrs. Hamar; while those spaces over the bookcases, which were, as we have seen, in Lord Chesterfield's day filled with portraits of illustrious literary characters, are now occupied by examples of Cotes and Zoffany, Opie, and the great Sir Joshua himself.

The small Dining Room rejoices in two Gainsboroughs and two Romneys, the former being represented by his portrait of Miss Franks as a little girl sitting on a bank and fondling a lamb, and Mrs. Morris, which hangs above the chimney-piece; while the canvases of the latter are portraits of two young boys, whose identity has not, I think, been satisfactorily established.

¹ Reproduced in Sir William Armstrong's *Life of Gainsborough*.

² This picture was painted at Bradwell in 1785-6; there is a three-quarter-length portrait of the same subject in the National Gallery.

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The great Ball Room, which, as I have said, has been formed by throwing two rooms into one, contains three works by Reynolds, two of which are full-length portraits; one of Lady Sunderlin,¹ who we know sat to Sir Joshua in June 1788, and the other of Frances Wyndham, second daughter of the second Earl of Egremont, and who was married to the first Earl of Romney in 1776; and here, too, hangs a replica of Reynolds's famous "Snake in the Grass," as well as the full-length of Colonel Bullock, by Gainsborough.

Even the Entrance Hall is lighted up by some fine works, notably Hoppner's "Boy with a Bow;" Gainsborough's "Lord Sudeley;" and the Gawlers, father and son, by Sir Joshua,² besides a fine and characteristic picture of birds by Hondekoeter, another of whose works hangs on the landing of the Grand Staircase.

Preserving, as it does, so much of the appearance and characteristic charm that made it a source of wonder and delight to the world of fashion that here gathered round its creator, Chesterfield House must always be one of the most, if not the most, intrinsically interesting of the great houses of London; but when to this is added the fact that in a hundred ways the place remains, both as to structure and internal decoration, as it appeared when the great Earl's loving care was first bestowed upon it with such profuseness and with such artistic discrimination, while the memory of that remarkable man is still redolent throughout it, preserved with pious care by the present owner who has further beautified the place by the wonders of art he has collected within it, I think Chesterfield House may proudly claim to be incomparable among the private palaces of London.

¹ This fine picture was exhibited at the Old Masters in 1894, and was reproduced in *The Graphic* for February 9, 1895.

² I can find no specific mention of this picture in Leslie and Taylor's *Life of Sir Joshua*, but in December 1776, Mr. Gawler paid £36, 15s. od. for his portrait, probably, from this price, only a bust; and the same picture is supposed to be that exhibited at the Royal Academy in the following year, as "Portrait of a Gentleman"; Master Gawler was sitting to Sir Joshua in February and November 1777.



Photo R. Haines.

THE RED DRAWING ROOM, CREWE HOUSE.

CHAPTER IX

CREWE HOUSE

THOSE who wander down Curzon Street will not fail to observe one of those rare oases amid the generally unrelieved ramparts of bricks and mortar which are to be found here and there in London. The plane trees that embower Crewe House look gaunt enough in winter, but in summer, when the sun glints through their thick foliage and casts a thousand chequered shadows on the ground, then indeed one realises how rare it is in London to find such a note of rusticity amid urban surroundings as one does here.

Building development has been in the past so irritatingly responsible for all lack of the proper appreciation of such rural adjuncts to the streets and houses of London, that to find it in conjunction with either, one has to go to the Embankment, where apparently nobody, except in cabs and trams, does go, or to such a place as Stafford House, the garden of which is the less conspicuous in this respect, because it adjoins the neighbouring mass of verdure in the Green Park. So that Crewe House is practically *sui generis* in that it stands in a street, and is yet almost hidden in its own umbrageous (to use a word beloved of an earlier generation) surroundings.

Curzon Street, in which, on the north side, Crewe House stands, is one of London's famous thoroughfares. Taking its name from George Augustus Curzon, third Viscount Howe, it has from its earliest day, about the middle of the eighteenth century, been notable for the number of its interesting and frequently illustrious inhabitants. Pope's Lord Marchmont lived in it, as did Mason, the poet; Lord Macartney, whose embassy to China is perpetuated in a volume, died in 1806, in the house here which, Walpole tells Lady Ossory, "is charming—and cheap as old clothes," and which was Lord Carteret's; "all antiqued and grotesqued by Adam," adds Horace, who never let an opportunity slip of having a side-hit at the fashionable architect. Sir Henry Halford represented surgery, and Sir Francis Chantrey sculpture, and Madame Vestris histrionic art here at a later day; while till their deaths here in 1852, the Miss Berrys resided at No. 8, a house later occupied by Baron

Bunsen. So that the street has been as notable for its residents in the past, as the pages of the Red Book show it to be to-day.

But interesting as have been the associations of the various dwellings in Curzon Street, Crewe House has an intrinsic interest of its own. It was erected by that Edward Shepherd who built what is known as Shepherd's Market about the year 1735, and who was also responsible for "many other buildings about Mayfair," where he owned and rented extensive property. He was living in 1708, in what is now Crewe House, or, more correctly speaking, in a smaller residence on its site, for it has been obviously enlarged, if not entirely rebuilt, since his day, and here nearly forty years later, to be exact, on September 24, 1747, he died, a notice of which event will be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the following October. In this year there appears in the Rate Books this entry: "Mr. Shepherd for ground rent of the Faire market and one house £1, 1s. od.," the "one house" ¹ probably referring to what is now Crewe House. At any rate it appears that Shepherd held a lease of part of the property on which the mansion stands from the ground landlord, Sir Nathaniel Curzon of Kedleston, which lease seems to have been renewed to his widow somewhere between 1747 and 1753, on the 16th of June of which latter year a fresh lease was granted by Sir Nathaniel Curzon of the first part, one John Phillips, described as a carpenter, of the second part, and the Right Hon. Charles Lord Viscount Fane of the third part, whereby the property was demised to Lord Fane for 985 years from the previous 25th of March 1753, and this lease was expressed to be "in consideration of the surrender of a former lease of part of the property granted to Elizabeth Shepherd, widow." ²

It is not improbable that Lord Fane bought out Mrs. Shepherd's rights in the property, and that he resided here for a number of years. He was the eldest son of the first Viscount Fane by his wife Mary, sister of Lord Stanhope, and was, of course, one of the family whose chiefs have been, since the days of James I., Earls of Westmoreland. After his death it would appear that his widow, Lady Fane, occupied the mansion, as she is recorded as living here from 1776 to 1792. She was followed in her tenancy by Lady Reade, and an interesting record of the latter lady's sojourn here is afforded by some of Sir John Soane's drawings, now preserved in the Soane Museum, which depict certain alterations made in the mansion, under his superintendence, and which bear his

¹ It is generally stated that in 1750, the mansion and grounds were offered for sale at £500, but this not improbably means that that sum was the premium asked for the existing lease.

² For this information I am indebted to the kindness of Messrs. Tylee & Co. who, at Lord Crewe's desire, have given me all the information they can about the property.

written testimony that they were executed "for Lady Reade's house" in 1813.

Lady Reade was apparently the wife of Sir John Chandos Reade, whose name appears in a further assignment of the 1753 lease of the property which took place on May 27, 1817, and which was made, to use the legal phraseology, "between Richard Maliphant and George Bramwell of the first part, Sir John Chandos Reade of the second part, and the Right Hon. Henry James Luttrell, Earl of Carhampton, of the third part." This confirms the statement of J. T. Smith in his *Streets of London*, to the effect that Lord Carhampton bought the place. Smith adds that this occurred after Lady Reade's death, and he affirms that £500 was the price then given for it; but it would seem that he was here confounding dates, unless, indeed, this sum was the amount again paid for the assignment of the lease as a premium. In any case this sum is insignificant enough to startle us who realise the enormously increased value of property in this quarter, and even if, as is probable, the house was smaller then than it is to-day, this fact can hardly lessen our astonishment.

The Earl of Carhampton, the head of the Luttrell family, now became the possessor of the property. His natural son was that Henry Luttrell whose *Advice to Julia* is still worth reading, and whose wit and conversation were considered by Gronow to far outshine those of his friend Rogers. Lord Carhampton was the hard-living, eccentric peer who, as Colonel Luttrell, had opposed Wilkes at the Brentford election, and had been the object of some of Junius's bitter attacks, and who was once Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Ireland, where, as he once told Napoleon, then First Consul at one of whose levees he was presented, he had the honour of serving when General Hoche landed in 1797.¹ Sir Nathaniel Wraxall tells a story of his later days which will, I think, bear repetition, as a proof, if nothing else, of the inadvisability of too premature an assumption of dead men's shoes. "In 1812," says the Diarist, "soon after the restrictions imposed by Parliament on the Regent were withdrawn, Lord Carhampton, lying in an apparently hopeless state at his house in Bruton Street, Berkeley Square, where he laboured under a dangerous internal malady, intelligence of his decease was prematurely carried to Carlton House. The Regent, who was at table when the report arrived, lending rather too precipitate credit to the information, immediately gave away his regiment, the Carabineers, to one of the company, a general officer, and he lost not a moment in kissing his royal highness's hand on the appointment. No sooner had the report reached Lord Carhampton than he instantly despatched a friend to Pall Mall,

¹ See *Fifty Years of My Life*, by Lord Albemarle.

empowered to deliver a message to the Prince. In it he most respectfully protested, that far from being a dead man, he hoped to surmount his present disease, and therefore humbly entreated him to dispose of any other regiment in the service except the Carabineers. Lord Carhampton humorously added, that his royal highness might rest assured he would give special directions to his attendants not to lose a moment after it could be ascertained that he was really dead in conveying the news to Carlton House."¹

Lord Carhampton did not retain his new property long, for on the 29th September 1818, he assigned his lease to James Archibald Wortley, member of Parliament for York, for the sum of £12,000, a price which is alone sufficient to show the extraordinary increase in the value of property in this neighbourhood at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

James Archibald Stuart-Wortley-Mackenzie, to give him his proper list of names, was the grandson of the third Earl of Bute, and great-grandson of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu—whose amusing letters, by-the-bye, he edited—and was born in 1776.² Commencing life in the Army, he gave up the art of "living by being killed," as Carlyle terms it, and entered Parliament in 1797, where he distinguished himself till 1826, when he was raised to the peerage as Baron Wharncliffe of Wortley. For a few months, from 1834, he was Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, and in 1841, occupied the high office of Lord President of the Council, as does the present noble owner of his old home, the Earl of Crewe, so that there is a certain appropriateness in the fact that the latter now possesses the house.

Mr. Stuart-Wortley, as he then was, married in March 1795, Lady Caroline Crichton, daughter of the first Earl of Erne, and died in 1845, having just celebrated his golden wedding, Lady Wharncliffe surviving him a little over ten years. According to Lady Dorothy Neville's last amusing book, Lord Wharncliffe used frequently to entertain the staff of the *Owl* at dinner here, and he occasionally contributed acrostics to that paper. The *Owl*, it is well known, was started by Evelyn Ashley, James Stuart-Wortley, and Lord Glenesk, other contributors being the Hon. Mrs. Norton, Bernal Osborne, Vernon Harcourt, A. Hayward, Lord Houghton, and Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford.

Wharncliffe House, as the mansion was then called, remained in the possession of the Stuart-Wortley family till the death of the first Earl in 1899, some time after which event the Earl of Crewe purchased it for £90,000, and changed its name to that which it now bears.

¹ *Posthumous Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 129.

² The additional name of Wortley was assumed by the father of the first Baron Wharncliffe, as was that of Mackenzie, but the latter only for himself and the successive heirs to his estate. That of Montagu was prefixed by the late Earl, and his brother the father of the present Earl.

Crewe House, as I began by saying, stands in a pleasant oasis of trees and shrubs, lying back from the main thoroughfare. From the latter it is not only screened by a wall, but, an unusual adjunct in town, by a hedge, and this together with the creeper-covered entrance lodge gives it a *rus in urbe* appearance which is unique among London houses. The mansion itself is a wide-fronted building, decorated by four Ionic columns and by large semicircular bays at either end, and is eloquent of the early Georgian days when young men of family made the grand tour, and returned home full of the beauties of Greece and Rome which they did what they could to apply to the domestic architecture of this country. Those were the days when the Society of Dilettanti was a power in the land, when Brettingham and Gavin Hamilton purveyed antiques from calmly indifferent countries, and Nicholas Revett and "Athenian" Stuart first set that fashion for exploring the dead ground of ancient Greece and Rome which was for a time followed so assiduously.

Although Crewe House does not claim to be a striking example of the fashion then inaugurated, it at least remains as a proof of the earnestness with which cultivated men then threw themselves into the quest for examples of the architecture of ancient times. Nothing can be said against such an enthusiasm; and if there be those who are critical over the application of such architecture to the everyday needs of a country so alien in every respect from the life and thought of early Greece or ancient Italy as England, it was at least a saner and more defensible movement than that which prompted Walpole and his school to imitate in stucco the solidity of Gothic, and to apply what was appropriate to castles to the architectural adornment of suburban villas.

In old records of Crewe House it is generally described as being "over against the chapel." Now this is not quite so distinctive an address as one might at first suppose, for although Mayfair or Curzon Chapel was exactly opposite, its site now being occupied by the massive building known as Sunderland House, erected for the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough a few years since, the other and very notorious Keith's so-called "chapel" also stood close by.

Mayfair Chapel, an ugly enough building, was erected in 1720, and is perhaps chiefly notable in having had, as its first incumbent, the notorious Rev. Alexander Keith, who performed marriages here without the formalities of banns or licence, and made a splendid thing out of it, until outraged authority put a stop to his activity in 1742. But such a man as Keith was hardly likely to be hindered by measures which were, it would seem, rather half-hearted, and he very soon afterwards established a chapel close by on the other side of the street. And not only this, he

even had the audacity to advertise his new place of business—for it was little else—and in order that those requiring his assistance should not have the excuse of not knowing his whereabouts, he set forth, in the *Daily Post* of July 20, 1744, the fact that “the little new chapel in Mayfair . . . is in the corner house, opposite to the city end of the great chapel, and within ten yards of it,” and added the information that “the minister (himself) and clerk live in the same corner house where the little chapel is,” concluding with the remark: “that it may be better known there is a porch at the door like a country church porch.” Here for one guinea inclusive Keith was prepared “at any hour till four in the afternoon” to splice amorous couples with a celerity and informality that carries us in imagination rather to Gretna Green or the Fleet than to the heart of fashionable London. Keith was imprisoned, but undaunted. During his incarceration his wife died, and he had her body embalmed until he should be able to attend her funeral; and he even went the length of making her decease a means of fresh advertisement for his chapel where he had arranged for a substitute to carry on his illegalities. When he was first told that the Bishops would put a stop to his action, he is said to have exclaimed: “Let them; and I will buy two or three acres of ground, and, by God, I’ll underbury them all.”

The name of those who took advantage of Keith’s impudence is legion; no less than 7000 marriages (if they can be so termed) are recorded as being celebrated by him or his myrmidons, in three old registers that survive, although this must have represented but a tithe of those performed; indeed it is stated that no less than 6000 persons were married in a single year, until the Marriage Act of 1754 stopped even his activity.

It was here that the Duke of Hamilton married Miss Gunning in 1752, “with a ring of the bed curtain,” as Horace Walpole relates in a frequently quoted passage; Lord George Bentinck was joined to Mary Davies here in the following year, and, to mention no others, it is said that on the very day before the Marriage Act came into force, no less than sixty-one couples were “spliced” by Keith’s unhallowed hands.

The moment of Keith’s greatest activity was that during which the Mayfair, from which the whole of this district takes its name, was held here, and which, dating from the time of Charles II., was continued without intermission till 1708, and then, after some years’ cessation, had an intermittent existence for another hundred years, being finally abolished in 1809, as the result of complaints and representations made by Lord Coventry, who lived close by.

The history of Mayfair is a fascinating subject, but not one that must detain us here; indeed we have loitered too long already outside Crewe

House in the not very edifying company of Mr. Keith and his delinquencies.

Like all large houses in London, Crewe House is filled with artistic treasures, and although there are many which have an historic *provenance*, the greater number have a claim to notice as being family heirlooms, which gives them an added interest. Considering what a large space Lord Crewe's father—the Monckton-Milnes, Lord Houghton, of an earlier day—occupied in the social, political, and literary life of his times, it would be strange if we did not find, in this house, a wealth of reminiscences of that remarkable man, and here in the Entrance Hall hangs his portrait by Rudolph Lehmann, while in the Drawing Room, the windows of which look out on to the garden over whose walls the Duke of Marlborough's stately stone residence rears its ample proportions, hang a number of portraits of the forbears of that most literary of peers.

Here are Sir Robert Milnes and his wife—Lady Milnes, daughter and co-heir of Joseph Poole of Drax Abbey—in full length, by Romney; and close by, Mrs. Cunliffe Offly, by Sir Thomas Lawrence; the dog which she nurses being from the hand of Landseer; an earlier portrait of the same lady, when yet Miss Emma Crewe, is by Hoppner; and the portrait of her husband, Mr. Cunliffe Offly, by Harlow, hangs on the opposite wall. Two more noticeable family portraits are those of John, first Lord Crewe,¹ and his wife Frances, Lady Crewe, daughter of Fulke Greville, of Wilbury, Wilts., by Lawrence; a beautiful portrait of Madame Rodes,² by Gainsborough, a picture of a young boy, entitled "Edwin," by Wright of Derby, and two landscapes by Zuccarelli, complete the pictorial decoration of the Drawing Room, in which French furniture and *bric-à-brac*, including beautiful snuff-boxes (preserved in glass-topped tables), are lighted up by two mirrors, one of which hangs over the mantelpiece, in elaborately carved and gilded frames, giving a touch of Italy to the apartment which the deeply moulded domed ceiling dominates.

From this Drawing Room two other apartments are reached, opening into each other, and forming one of the delightful vistas which are so pleasant a feature in many of the larger London houses. The Boudoir, with one of those recesses beloved by Georgian builders, is the room seen through an intervening apartment known as the Central Drawing Room, in which hangs Romney's speaking portrait of Miss Hannah Milnes, and from which opens an octagonal winter garden. The Boudoir, with its Louis Quinze and Louis Seize furniture, and its peaceful outlook on

¹ He was born in 1742, and died 1829; and had been created a peer in 1806.

² Sir Godfrey Rodes of Great Houghton, of whom there is a portrait at Fryston, was the direct ancestor of Lord Houghton.

to the gardens, is, indeed, one must think, named on the same *lucus a non lucendo* principle on which Lord Chesterfield once said his similarly called room at Chesterfield House was. Miniatures of members of both Lord and Lady Crewe's family, old theatrical prints, *bijouterie*, and the thousand and one costly trifles that help to furnish a room, are here ; and here, too, is a marvellous writing-table in marqueterie, the work of the great André Boulle.

There are, too, several pictures of great interest in this room, among which I must particularly note a small but very fine portrait of Miss Emma Crewe by Gainsborough, and a portrait of Fanny Burney by Downman, by whom there is another head of a young girl, not improbably, though the fact is not stated, one of the numerous portraits of the ladies of the Crewe family, which the artist is known to have executed during the year 1777. There is, besides, a noticeable portrait of Lord Chesterfield, as well as "Le Jardin d'Amour," by Rubens, a small copy or possibly a replica of the celebrated picture now in the Prado, which Philip IV. of Spain caused to be hung in his bedroom ; and there is also Clarkson Stanfield's "Bridge of Angers," among other works which help to beautify the room.

From the Boudoir one enters the Library, which until recently was rather sombre with its black ebony bookcases and dark wall-paper, but which has now been converted into a bright, almost gay, room. The relatively few books here are chiefly those required for reference and official work, Lord Crewe's fine Library being at Fryston, but there are two pictures of peculiar interest in this room ; one is the portrait of John Keats at Wentworth Place, seated and holding a book, by Severn, another example of which is in the National Portrait Gallery ; the other, Stone's drawing of Rogers, Mrs. Norton, and Mrs. Phipps, sitting talking round a table ; and the three-quarter-length portrait of Miss Amabel Crewe, afterwards Lady Houghton, mother of the present Lord Crewe, by Sir William Boxall, has an intrinsic interest in this house, although as a work of art it can only be considered as mediocre.

The Dining Room on the west side of the house is a similar room to the Library, but much longer. Two pillars support the ceiling at the back of the room ; and here again, as in the Library, a change of decorative note has largely improved the lighting and general appearance of the apartment, which was formerly panelled with a dado in rich dark oak, and possessed a sideboard of massive proportions and other decorations *en suite* ; now, however, white is the prevailing tone, and an air of lightness has been given to the room which has greatly added to its charm. Among the pictures which hang here, is a portrait of George Canning,

as a young man, by Hickey, and George, Prince of Wales, by Hoppner; and there is an interesting work by Stubbs representing R. S. Milnes, Esq., M.P., on horseback; although it is the two Romney portraits of the first Lord Crewe, and of Mrs. Shore Milnes, that will chiefly attract the lover of the beautiful in art.

Compared with many of the great mansions I am dealing with in this book, Crewe House itself is relatively small, and its contents, beautiful as they are, few in number; but, on the other hand, the area occupied by the mansion and its gardens is, considering its position in the heart of Mayfair, an unusually large one, and the residence has been for the last hundred and seventy years such a landmark, having existed at a time when all between it and Piccadilly was as yet unbuilt over, that it has, I think, for these reasons alone a right to be included among the great houses of London; added to this is the fact that from its connection with Lord Wharncliffe in the past, and the Earl of Crewe in the present, it is able to take its place among those mansions which may be regarded as political centres, whose walls have listened to history in the making, and whose floors have felt the tread of generations of illustrious feet.

As I write there is an attempt to sell Crewe House, with its gardens extending to an area of over 29,000 square feet; and as the particulars tell me, comprising the choicest site in Mayfair, and one of the most important in the west-end. Should the old house and its unique grounds pass into the hands of some one buying it as a residence, all will be well; but if, as is more likely when we look round and see what has happened in analogous cases—in that of Harcourt House, for instance—the property is purchased for building development, then we may expect one day in the near future to see palatial flats dominating this spot and perhaps equalling in solidity, and more than equalling in size, Sunderland House opposite. In this case what has been here set down about Crewe House will, I hope, serve to recall its past outlines, and the interest of its contents to those to whom it has for long been a landmark, and to those who have so often gathered together within its hospitable walls.

Nothing is so difficult to remember as the appearance of a building that has been demolished; the mind, apparently, is so much more capable of receiving new impressions than of retaining old ones; and it is for this reason that any attempt to preserve the features of some building which is likely to become the victim of time's destroying hand, contributes something to the rehabilitation of the ever-changing features of our great city. J. T. Smith was one of the few, in an earlier day, who realised this fact, which luckily in these times is thought more important than was

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formerly the case ; and nowadays, when the various societies that exist for this purpose are unable to actually preserve intact some threatened landmark, there is at least an endeavour made to perpetuate, by pen and pencil, the vanishing points of interest in the metropolis. It is as important that this should be done in the west-end as in the City itself ; but there are still many who seem to think that architectural and historical interest almost ceases this side of Charing Cross ; forgetting that much of the best work of the Adams, to mention but these, was done in this region ; and unmindful of the fact that the social life under the Georges, with which so much of this western part of the town is identified, is practically synonymous with the historic annals of that fascinating period.

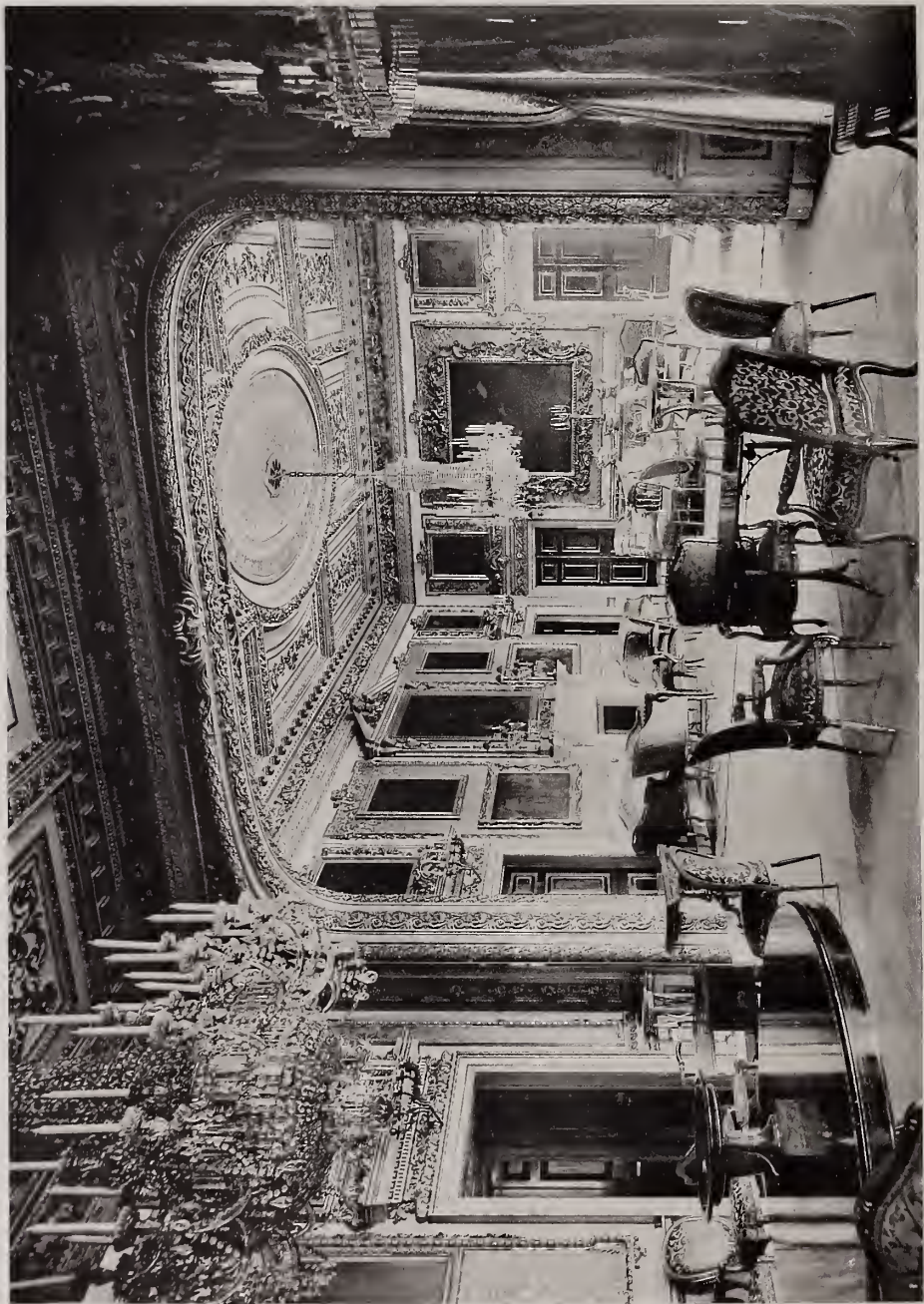


Photo J. Russell & Sons.

THE BALL ROOM DEVONSHIRE HOUSE.

CHAPTER X

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE

IF one wished to give a foreigner an idea of the wealth and influence of some of our great families as reflected in their territorial possessions, it is probable that one could find in London no better illustration of this than the great house whose name heads this chapter. There are other splendid mansions as large, but none, taking into account the extent of the grounds and fore-court of Devonshire House, that cover so extensive an area, and when this and the extraordinarily fine position it occupies is remembered, few people, even the most unbusiness-like, will fail to recognise what this means in estimated value. Indeed, all sorts of fabulous sums have been mentioned as representing the intrinsic worth of the ducal property, and, as usual, with anything that bulks largely in the public eye, all sorts of erroneous reports have been from time to time circulated about it.

Devonshire House stands on the site of the mansion known as Berkeley House, which Lord Berkeley of Stratton erected about the year 1665, at a cost of "neere £30,000" as Evelyn tells us, on ground formerly occupied by a farm called "Hay Hill Farm," from which, of course, the neighbouring Hay Hill takes its name. The architect of the house was Hugh May, the friend of Evelyn and designer of Cassiobury Park and Lady Fox's house at Chiswick, amongst other important buildings, whose brother, Baptist May, was also a well-known architect of the day.

That the house was finished by the spring of 1666, is evidenced by Evelyn, who mentions waiting on Lord Clarendon at Clarendon House, "and Lord Berkeley's built next to it," on May 22 of that year. From another entry in the *Diary*, we get some idea of the formation and extent of the place, for, writing on September 25, 1672, Evelyn says: "I din'd at Lord John Berkley's newly arrived out of Ireland, where he had been Deputy: it was in his new house, or rather palace. . . . It is very well built, and has many noble roomes, but they are not very convenient, consisting of but one *Corps de Logis*: they are all roomes of state, without clossets. The staire-case is of cedar; the furniture is princely; the

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kitchen and stables are ill placed, and the corridore worse, having no report to the wings they joyne to. For the rest, the fore-court is noble ; so are the stables ; and above all the gardens, which are incomparable by reason of the inequality of the ground, and a pretty *piscina*. The holly hedges on the terrace I advised the planting of. The porticos are in imitation of a house described by Palladio, but it happens to be the worst in his booke ; though my good friend, Mr. Hugh May, his Lordship's architect, effected it."

This description can be supplemented by that given in the *New View of London* for 1708, in which we are also told that "the house is built of brick, adorned with stone pilasters, and an entablature and pitched pediment, all of the Corinthian order, under which is a figure of Britannia carved in stone. At some distance on the east side is the kitchen and laundry, and on the west side stables and lodging-rooms, which adjoin the mansion by brick walls, and two circular galleries, each elevated on columns of the Corinthian order, where are two ambulatories."

The reader will probably consider this extract sufficient. How the writer revels in his "entablatures" and his "Corinthian orders"! With what unction he mouths out, *ore rotundo*, his "pitched pediments," and his "ambulatories"! Was he, one wonders, paid like Dumas, by the line?

Evelyn, as we have seen, found no little fault with old Berkeley House ; Ralph, on the other hand, considers it not only "very elegant," but goes so far as to say that it was "quite worthy of the masterhand of Inigo Jones," which, when we remember Ralph's habitual fault-finding with nearly every building in London, is extraordinarily high praise ; while Macky notes that at the back, it "hath a beautiful vista to Hampstead and the adjacent country"!

Lord Berkeley of Stratton died in 1678, but his widow continued to reside in the house. It is probable that the noble grounds, which, we must remember, formerly not only contained Devonshire House and its gardens as we know them, but also the whole of Berkeley Square and the adjacent streets, had attracted the eyes of the builders even then, and that tempting offers had been made to Lady Berkeley ; and, indeed, an entry by Evelyn in his *Diary* for June 12, 1684, confirms this. Says he: "I went to advise and give directions about the building two streets in Berkeley Gardens, reserving the house and as much of the garden as the breadth of the house. In the meantime, I could not but deplore that sweete place (by far the most noble gardens, courts, and accommodations, stately porticoes, &c., anywhere about towne) should be so much straightened and turned into tenements." He, however, finds some small consolation in the fact that Lord Clarendon's great place had

met with a worse fate, and considers that it afforded "some excuse for my Lady Berkeley's resolution of letting out her ground also."

The price paid staggered even Evelyn's calm philosophy, "advancing neere £1000 per ann. in mere ground rents"; "to such a mad intemperance was the age come of building about a citty," he exclaims, "by far too disproportionate already to the nation." What would he have said to the size of London of to-day, and the prices cheerfully paid for ground in it?

A few years later Berkeley House was to have a royal occupant, for the Princess Anne, resisting every attempt made by her sister Queen Mary to induce her to dismiss her confidante, Lady Marlborough, was forced to leave her lodgings in the Cockpit, and on doing so established herself here, with her husband, Prince George of Denmark;¹ although she did not entirely give up her former residence, still using it as a lodging for some of her servants.

A letter written by the Princess to Lady Marlborough, and dated May 22, 1692, from Sion House, indicates the moment when she took possession of Berkeley House. "Some time next week, I believe, it will be time for me to go to London, to make an end of that business of Berkeley House." She had been in negotiation for renting it during the quarrel with her sister, and when this became acute she hastened to complete the matter. Among the Lansdowne papers in the British Museum, there is an amusing squib, entitled "The Bellman of Piccadilly's Verses to the Princess Anne of Denmark," which refers to her Royal Highness's residence in Berkeley House; the lines run thus:—

"Welcome, great princess! to this lowly place,
Where injured royalty must hide its face;
Your praise each day by every man is sung,
And in the night by me shall here be rung.
God bless our Queen! and yet I may, moreover,
Own you our queen in Berkeley Street and Dover:
May you and your great prince live numerous years!
This is the subject of our loyal prayers."

Here, says Miss Strickland, "the Princess, divested of every mark of her royal rank, continued to live, where she and her favourite amused themselves with superintending their nurseries, playing at cards, and talking treason against Queen Mary and 'her Dutch Caliban,' as they called the hero of Nassau."

¹ During the Princess's residence here a silver cistern, valued at £750, was stolen, and the theft was advertised in No. 94 of *The Postman* for 1695. The cistern was afterwards found in the possession of a distiller in Twickenham, who was tried and convicted of the theft.

Thus matters went on, until the fatal illness of the Queen, when Berkeley House was agog with excitement, for the Princess Anne was heir to the throne, and although she personally held no communication with the Court, the news of the Queen's illness, and all the phases of her malady, filtered through from the servants at the Palace to those in Piccadilly. Mary breathed her last on December 28, 1694 (old style),¹ but on the preceding Christmas Day, when her state was known to be hopeless, vast crowds of courtiers and time-servers, who had hitherto treated Anne with studied neglect, flocked to pay their court to the rising sun at Berkeley House. *Mutatis mutandis*, it was not dissimilar from that "rush of the whole Court" rushing as in a wager, with a sound "terrible and absolutely like thunder," with which the French Court hastened from the death-bed of Louis the well-beloved to greet his successor! An amusing incident is said to have occurred on one of these occasions. Lord Carnarvon, a half-witted peer, was annoyed at being surrounded by all these tuft-hunters, and as he stood close to Anne, took the opportunity of remarking aloud to her: "I hope your Royal Highness will remember that I always came to wait on you when none of this company did." No little amusement was caused by this, but some of the courtiers were put a good deal out of countenance by it.

At last even William recognised that further open hostility would be useless, and with a letter of condolence to him from Anne, the breach, if not actually closed, was to all appearances, cemented. He received her at Kensington Palace, where, owing to her then weak state of health, she was carried in her chair actually into the royal presence; he bestowed the Garter on her son, the Duke of Gloucester; and he offered her St. James's as a residence. It would appear that the Princess took advantage of this last favour in the spring of 1696, when her connection with Berkeley House came to an end.

In the following year the property was purchased by the first Duke of Devonshire. William Cavendish, the son of the third Earl of Devonshire, was born in 1641, and succeeded to the earldom in 1684; he had acted as cup-bearer to the Queen on the occasion of James the Second's coronation, but this did not prevent his enjoying the favour of William, under whom he filled various high offices, and by whom he was created Marquis of Hartington and Duke of Devonshire, in 1694. He married Lady Mary Butler, daughter of the first Duke of Ormonde, and was considered by Macky, "the finest and handsomest gentleman of his time." Burnet, too, notices the "softness in his exterior deportment," but adds that "there was nothing within that was answerable."

¹ The French date her death January 7, 1695.

The purchase of Berkeley House seems to have been attended by some initial difficulties, as it appears that the Marquis of Normanby had also been in treaty for it, and indeed considered that he had bought it. Narcissus Luttrell, whose diary is a storehouse for this sort of information, sheds some light on the matter. Thus we learn that, on December 5, 1696, the Lords debated the question, and referred it to a committee which was to make its report the following week. On the 10th of the month, "their Lordships debated the matter of privilege between the Duke of Devon, Marquess of Normanby, and the Lord Berkley about the sale of Berkly House, and ordered them all to waive their privilege after this sessions; but the proceedings in law may go on, which the Duke of Devon has already done." The Chancery proceedings, however, seem to have been as much delayed as those of the House of Lords, and on May 13, 1697, we find the case being put off "till next term." However, on July 7, a long discussion took place between the Duke and the Marquis about Berkeley House "(both pretending to have bought it), but it proving very tedious, the council for the former only was heard." On October 28, another long hearing was held before the Lord Chancellor and the two Chief Justices, and after counsel had been fully heard, judgment was reserved for a fortnight; but, adds Luttrell, "most beleive twil be for his grace," and so it turned out, for on January 1, 1697-8, Luttrell concludes with this entry: "Thursday last the lord chancellor, assisted by two chief justices, further heard the matter depending between the Duke of Devon and the Marquesse of Normanby about the purchase of Berkley House; and after mature deliberation, decreed it for the Duke of Devon."

On the following 31st of March the Duke entertained the King at dinner here; and his grace must have set out from here, when he met Colonel Culpepper, at "the auction-house in St. Alban's Street," on June 30, in the same year, and caned him, "for being troublesome to him in the last reign"; while Luttrell notes that Count Tallard, the French Ambassador, dined at Berkeley House with the Duke, on January 3, 1699-1700. It is, indeed, but natural to suppose that the place was as much the resort of fashion and the centre of hospitality in William the Third's reign, as its successor, Devonshire House, has been in our own day.

The first Duke of Devonshire died here, on August 18, 1707, having received the last rites of the Church at the hands of the Bishop of Ely, and having left "orders to pay his just debts, and for that end has all his jewells, and the finest sett of plate in England," says Luttrell.

The second Duke, who occupied almost as many high offices as his

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father, succeeded to the property, and when in London lived at Devonshire House, as it had now begun to be called. Here he died, on June 4, 1729, when he, in turn, was succeeded by his son, the third Duke, during whose tenure of the title the disastrous fire which entirely destroyed the house, occurred here. Some alterations were in progress, when, owing to the carelessness of one of the workmen employed, a glue-pot which had been left on the fire, boiled over, and the escape of flaming liquid set fire to some woodwork. Every effort was made to extinguish the flames, and to save the more valuable contents, and luckily the library, pictures, and other objects of art were rescued, mainly through the help of a body of the Guards, who, under the direction of the Earl of Albemarle, not only saved many rarities from the flames, but also preserved them from the hardly less rapacious hands of the mob which had gathered round the burning pile. Among the crowd was Frederick, Prince of Wales, as well as many people of distinction who, in those days, were always attracted by such a scene. Ralph *à propos* of this catastrophe says: "Had his grace's servants recollected their master's motto, *Cavendo tutus*, it (the house) had still retained its ancient splendour; but as they did not understand the beauties of Inigo Jones's¹ architecture, so they were not concerned for its preservation"; and he adds, "'Tis our happiness to have remembered it as it formerly stood, great in simplicity, and elegant in plainness."

The loss to the Duke was estimated at not less than £30,000, while, in addition, the statue of Britannia, which I have before mentioned as surmounting the portico, and which had cost £3500, fell from its pedestal some days after the actual conflagration, and was irretrievably broken. But perhaps what was most deplorable was the loss of the staircase paintings, the work of Laguerre, which it was not humanly possible to save. Curiously enough, however, another quasi mural painting was rescued; this was the violin which John Vander Vaart had painted against one of the doors of the house, and which, says Walpole, deceived every one who saw it into supposing it an actual instrument; a curiosity that is now preserved at Chatsworth.

This disastrous fire occurred on October 16, 1733, and in the *Daily Journal* for the following day, a long and graphic account of the circumstance is given. Only a few months before the catastrophe, the Duke gave a ball at Devonshire House, which is mentioned in one of Lady Wentworth's letters to her son; where, after naming some of the company, she details as follows, the sort of refreshment provided for our forefathers on such occasions: "We had a very handsome supper, viz.,

¹ Meaning that May, its architect, had taken hints from the greater master.

at the upper end cold chicken, next to that a dish of cake, parch'd almonds, sapp biskets, next to that, a dish of tarts and cheesecakes, next to that a great custard, and next to that another dish of biskets, parch'd almonds, and preserved apricocks, and next a quarter of lamb"! There is no doubt that this was but one of many such entertainments which the first three Dukes of Devonshire gave here; for not only their natural inclination towards hospitality, but also the great positions they respectively occupied, would, in a sense, have made such gatherings necessary, as well as pleasurable to them.

On the destruction of his residence the third Duke at once set about the erection of the present mansion. He selected as his architect, William Kent,¹ who produced a building which is not very likely to add to his reputation; and Ralph is bitterly sarcastic, as is his playful way, over its elevation. "It is spacious, and so are the East India Company's Warehouses," says he, "and both are equally deserving praise." The critic also falls foul of the wall which fronts Piccadilly, which indeed was severe enough before the happy thought of placing the beautiful gates from Chiswick House added both interest and dignity to it.

Kent received £1000 for his plan and elevations of the new house, the building of which cost, according to Pennant, twenty times that sum. The topographer once went over the mansion, under the guidance of Dr. Lort, the then librarian, on which occasion he made a few desultory notes of the pictures which chiefly attracted his notice, confining his attention, however, to the portraits, which, he says, "are so numerous that I must leave the complete list to those who have more opportunity of forming it than I had." Among those he does mention was that, attributed to Tintoretto, of Marc Antonio de Dominis, Archbishop of Spalatro, the Italian theologian and natural philosopher, who came to this country, and having abjured the Roman Catholic religion, became master of the Savoy and Dean of Windsor, when, again retracting, he was ordered out of the country, and died miserably in prison at Rome, in 1624.² Titian's portrait of himself; Rembrandt's Jewish Rabbi; the whole length in armour of Philip II., by Titian; Sir Thomas Browne³ with his wife and four daughters, by Dobson, which last

¹ Kent is too well known to require any notice here, but I may remind the reader that he designed Holkham, among many other works, the plan and elevations of which were published by Brettingham as his own, much to Walpole's disgust. Kent died at Burlington House in 1748.

² This picture is now at Chatsworth. As the late Mr. Arthur Strong pointed out, it could not be by Tintoretto, as the painter died in 1594, and Antonio was born in 1566. In *The Masterpieces in the Duke of Devonshire's Collection* it is attributed to an unknown painter of the North Italian School.

³ This still hangs in the Dining Room at Devonshire House.

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picture reminds our author of a quaint passage in the *Religio Medici*; and Vandyck's presentment (now at Chatsworth) of Arthur Goodwin, the friend of John Hampden, are among the portraits that Pennant notes, but he makes no attempt to describe the works by the great Italian masters, which then formed, according to his own showing, "by far the finest private collection in England."

The builder and internal beautifier of Devonshire House died in 1755, and was succeeded by his son, the fourth Duke, who, for his uncompromising hostility to Lord Bute, was called by that statesman's protectress, the Princess-Dowager of Wales, "King of the Whigs." He, indeed, inaugurated the political traditions which, during his successor's day, made Devonshire House the great centre of Whiggism. The Duke, who had married Lady Charlotte Boyle, daughter and heiress of the third Earl of Burlington (the architect Earl), died in 1764, when his son, the fifth Duke, reigned in his stead. The pencil of Sir Joshua¹ and the pen of Wraxall have left us pictures of his personality. The latter speaks of his figure as being "tall and stately," and remarks that "his manners were always calm and unruffled." By birth and tradition he was head of the Whig faction; but the more active part of disseminating Liberal views and preaching the Liberal propaganda, was played by his beautiful first Duchess (for he was twice married),² the celebrated Georgiana, daughter of John, first Earl Spencer.

There has been far too much written about this beautiful and amiable woman to make it necessary for me here to recapitulate her talents, her loveliness, or her fame. She reigned as a queen, not only by virtue of her beauty, but because of her gracious manner, her quick sympathy, her splendid enthusiasm. At a time when it was supposed to become great ladies to affect boredom and *ennui*, the Duchess devoured London with activity in support of her friends and her principles. Fox won his celebrated Westminster election by her strenuous exertions. We all know the story of the kiss by which she wrung a vote from a reluctant butcher.

"Condemn not, prudes, fair Devon's plan
In giving Steel a kiss,
In such a cause for such a man
She could not do amiss,"

sang one whose admiration for Fox was only equalled by that for his beautiful supporter. When Fox was returned, it was at Devonshire

¹ The famous Reynolds portrait of the Duchess with her child is now at Chatsworth.

² The second time, in 1809, to Elizabeth, second daughter of the fourth Earl of Bristol.

House, where the Prince of Wales, and a number of the first Whig families in the kingdom were assembled, that the apotheosis of the "man of the people" took place; and there it was that all that was most brilliant, in intellect or fashion, came as to the shrine of a tutelary goddess.

Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, did what no other woman could have done with unsullied reputation in those days when Gillray and Rowlandson caricatured features and misrepresented actions in every sort of gross and indecent caricature. Her power over women was so great that she succeeded in abolishing "hoops" and introducing feathers; so lasting over men, that the fastidious Walpole records how "her youth, figure, glowing good-nature, sense, lively and modest familiarity, make her a phenomenon"; and, when she died untimely at the height of her beauty and fame, George, Prince of Wales, could say, "We have lost the best bred woman in England"; and Charles James Fox exclaim, "We have lost the gentlest heart!"

The "beautiful Duchess" died on March 30, 1806, and apart from the influence she wielded alike over the minds and hearts of her generation, she left a permanent mark of her individuality in Devonshire House itself, where a small room, decorated in blue and silver, was designed by her. When her son, the sixth Duke, succeeded his father in 1811, he practically redecorated the whole of the interior of the house, with the exception of this room which he preserved in the same state as it had been during his mother's lifetime.

The sixth Duke well kept up the traditions of his illustrious family and the great house with which its name is so closely identified. Of courteous and noble manners, particularly handsome and attractive, and standing over six feet in height, his friendship was extended, like that of Lord Lansdowne, to those whose talents alone enabled them to figure in the world of fashion, of which he was one of the leaders. Lord Macaulay says that he never saw "so princely an air and manner," and at George the Fourth's coronation, where the Duke bore the orb, the same authority states that "he looked as if he came to be crowned instead of his master." Like all the chiefs of his family, he held a variety of great offices, which he filled with dignity and success. "No man was more looked up to by his own adherents and his family," says Henry Greville, "and few men in the same position will have left a more kindly recollection"; and Charles Greville remarks that "he was very clever and very comical, with a keen sense of humour, frequently very droll with his intimate friends, and his letters were always very amusing."

It was during his reign that Devonshire House was the scene of that notable performance of Bulwer-Lytton's comedy, "Not so bad as we

seem," which was got up for the benefit of the Guild of Literature and Art, on May 16, 1851; the Queen and Prince Albert being among the distinguished audience, and Charles Dickens, appearing as Lord Wilmot, "a young man at the head of the mode," a part that apparently did not suit him, as Horne remarks that he appeared "more like the captain of a Dutch privateer!" The performance took place in the great Ball Room, which at that time was then decorated in white and gold, the walls being hung in blue and gold brocade.

The works of art that now hang in this splendid apartment comprise—"The Adoration of the Magi," by Paul Veronese, a superb rendering of a subject that has exercised the skill of nearly all the great masters. Waagen very properly considers this work as one of the painter's most notable achievements, and likens its clear warm tones to those of Titian himself, and there is no doubt but that this high praise is fully justified. The characteristic attitude of the chief of the Magi (obviously a portrait), who kneels before the infant Christ, is no less noticeable than the natural pose of Joseph, who leans over Mary's shoulder, and seems to reveal a curious wonder at the scene.

Another remarkable work here is Caravaggio's "Guitar and Flute Players," executed with a breadth and certainty of draughtsmanship worthy of Velasquez himself; there is also a somewhat similar work, representing a group of musicians, which has been attributed to this master, but it falls far short of the "Guitar and Flute Players" in beauty and power, and should probably be more rightly assigned to Mattia Preti, called Il Calabrese. Close by hangs a small but most exquisite example of Nicholas Poussin, his "Shepherds in Arcady," a picture very similar to that in the Louvre, but if anything a finer specimen of his art. The subdued tones, browns and yellows, which form the colour scheme of this work, are treated in the most effective way; but it is unfortunate that the canvas is placed so high up on the wall that some of its beauties are apt to escape any but those whose attention is specifically drawn to it.

But fine as are the canvases I have mentioned, there are two in this apartment which may be regarded as masterpieces of their respective painters; one is "The Holy Family with St. Elizabeth," by Rubens, which hangs over one of the mantelpieces, and in which, although much of the work is probably that of pupils, more of the great man's own touch appears than is always the case with his large pictures; and the other the consummate Jordaens, representing Frederick, Prince of Orange and his Princess, but long supposed to be portraits of Van Zurpele, Burgomaster of Deist and Councillor to the Prince of Orange, and his wife.

The former picture is of most exquisite quality—how, being the work of the great Flemish artist, could it well be otherwise!—but it is in his middle manner, if I may so term it, after he had thrown off the restraint of the somewhat hard and formal methods which were in vogue in his youth, and by which many of his earlier conceptions were to some extent trammelled; and before certainty of touch and sureness of treatment had seduced him into that more florid style which has blinded many to his transcendent merits. The Jordaens is probably that painter's finest achievement in portraiture. For long its beauty of colouring, its sureness of line, and that something which is as difficult to describe as it is to communicate, which is the very spirit of rightness, caused it to be ascribed to Rubens himself; certainly the master could not have done better even at his best; and here the great pupil, rising to the heights which the master dominated, in this work at least equalled the greater man on his own ground. The late Mr. Arthur Strong suggests that the picture probably came into the possession of the Devonshire family at the time of the negotiations between the Whig leaders and the Prince of Orange, afterwards William III., which led to the Revolution of 1688. The picture is of great size, and is let into the wall, being surrounded by a most beautiful and elaborate carved and gilt frame—a frame that would make an indifferent work appear ridiculous, and which is massive enough to dwarf any but a most consummate work of art.

After these two masterpieces, the other pictures in the room, fine as many of them are, seem almost commonplace; but this is really anything but the case, and Andrea del Sarto's "Holy Family"; "Diana and her Nymphs," by Carlo Maratti, and Le Sueur's rather decorative than intrinsically beautiful "Solomon and the Queen of Sheba," are all excellent examples of these painters. One other work deserves a word; it is the portrait of a young man, which has recently been ascribed to Titian. It has lately been cleaned, and its luminous tones may well have been produced by the brush of the great Venetian at the period in which he produced his "Man with the Glove," in the Louvre. If it be not by Titian, then it is the production of one who, for the nonce, painted as well as the master could have done.

Apart from the pictorial treasures in the Ball Room, there is a wealth of beautiful things, porcelain and furniture, in this splendid apartment, which, with its elaborate gilding, and ceiling decoration, is in itself a thing to wonder at, reminding one of those Venetian palaces in which colour is enriched by gold, and gold takes on a hundred shimmering tints from adjacent colour.

In the Red Drawing Room, which takes its name from the tones of

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the brocaded-silk wall-hangings, another artistic banquet awaits us ; but I can only mention one or two of the more important pictures. One of these is the portrait, three-quarter-length, of a young girl, which has been for long attributed to Velasquez, but which, on the great authority of Signor Barute, is now assigned to Mazo, his son-in-law and pupil. The subject of the picture would seem to be Mazo's wife, and in the Wallace Collection she is to be found again, painted by her father. The Devonshire House example is a remarkable *tour de force*, especially for a painter whose productions, though uniformly good, can never be said to have reached the greatest height of artistic endeavour ; its treatment is besides so similar to Velasquez's manner that it seems to me not improbable that Mazo may have copied it, or at least integral portions of it, from some of his father-in-law's work, especially as we know that Mazo's skill in this direction was so great that Philip IV. ordered him to make copies of all the finest Venetian paintings in the Royal collection, and that he performed the task in so masterly a manner that it was impossible to tell his work from the originals.

Another noticeable picture in this room is the portrait of his daughter, by Cornelius de Vos. It represents the little girl standing facing the spectator, in the unaffected attitude of childhood, and holding up her apron from which peep out some gathered flowers ; the lower part of the figure may be considered somewhat hard and formal ; there is, too, something to seek in the drawing of the little podgy hands ; but the head, with its hair ruffled by the wind, and the speaking eyes which look out with curious intentness, are a splendid proof of what heights even a lesser painter can reach when the subject is one after his own heart.¹

In the Red Drawing Room, too, hangs a picture of a man and his wife, of which the painter is unknown ; but it is so excellent as to make one wonder at the fact that neither the artist's name nor the *provenance* of the work has been preserved. From the maps and globe introduced into the canvas, as well as the hard, weather-beaten face of the man, it is evident that he is a navigator ; and the gentle, somewhat anxious features of the wife (in which lies the chief beauty of the work) seem to tell of long periods of solitary anxiety and suspense, now for a time cleared away, as her husband sits safely beside her, and tells her of the "dangers he had pass'd."

In this room there is also a portrait of Pope Innocent X., attributed to Velasquez, but more likely traceable to one of his followers ; it has a

¹ This picture which was formerly at Chiswick, seems to have once been attributed to Velasquez, but Lord Ronald Gower, in his *Historic Galleries of England* (1883), on the authority of Dr. Richter, assigns it to Alonso Sanchez-Coello.



Photo J. Russell & Sons.

THE RED DRAWING ROOM, DEVONSHIRE HOUSE.

resemblance to the famous portrait of the ill-favoured pontiff at Apsley House, and also to that which hangs in the Palazzo Doria, but is much rougher in treatment, and less sure in draughtsmanship than either of these masterpieces. The full-length portrait of another Pope, by Carlo Maratti, hangs close by, and is a fine and soft piece of work curiously dissimilar in manner to the Innocent X.

But the gems of the Red Drawing Room are the two Rembrandts; both portraits of old men, one of whom is shown in full face, and dressed in the fur-lined cloak which indicated municipal rank; the other, and much finer work, representing an old man resting his head on his hand, and dressed in a furred robe. The glorious golden tones with which Rembrandt so often suffused his pictures is present in a remarkable degree in this wonderful canvas. In the absence of any accurate information as to the identity of the subject, it seems probable that it was painted from the model who is portrayed by Rembrandt as "The Mathematician," now in the Cassel Museum, a work executed about the year 1656.

In an ante-room leading from the Red Drawing Room, hangs a Van Goyen of unusual power, and depth of *impasto*; a Weenix, showing some cattle among ruins; and two of Sebastian Ricci's decorative works; while "A Bacchante," by Antoine Coypel, is noteworthy as being no less rich in colouring than beautiful in drawing, although, as was usual with this painter, the chief figure is portrayed with a theatricality which gives a certain factitious appearance to the whole composition.

The Dining Room at Devonshire House contains a number of interesting works, among them being that of Sir Thomas Browne's family, which has been before referred to as having been seen by Pennant, and then attributed to Dobson. I cannot but think, however, that it is more likely the work of Van Somer, the heads of the two little girls in the centre of the picture being much more in the style of the Flemish than of the English painter. There has, too, been a question as to whether the man in the group represents Sir Thomas or his father; if the latter be correct, then the future author of the *Religio Medici* is the child on the mother's knee, and as he is known to have had three sisters (the number of the little girls in the picture), this supposition would seem to be based on tenable grounds.¹ By Lely is the portrait of an architect which hangs close by. There seems some doubt as to whom this picture actually represents, and I make the suggestion for what it be worth that it is a portrait of Caius Gabriel Cibber. It is a particularly fine work, and

¹ If the picture is by Van Somer, then the child would be the future Sir Thomas Browne; as he was born in 1605, and the painter died in 1621, whereas Dobson was not born till 1610.

Lely did not often reach the heights to which it attains. There are here, also, several Vandycks, notably the Countess of Carlisle¹ and her young daughter, the presentment of the child being a perfect piece of painting; and two members of the Cavendish family of that period, or at least so they are said to be, although one of them has a marked resemblance to the unfortunate Lord Falkland; an indifferent head of Lord Strafford hangs over one of the doors, and above the mantelpiece is a good copy of Vandyck's full-length portrait of Clara Eugenia, daughter of Philip IV. of Spain, and widow of the Archduke Albert. With these is Sir Joshua's splendid rendering of Lord Richard Cavendish, who was sitting to the painter on June 3, 1780, when the Gordon rioters first startled the town.² Walpole calls this picture "one of the best, if not the best," that Reynolds ever painted; high praise, which, however, is justified by its beauty and delicacy.

But, notwithstanding this, the gem of the room is the superlatively great portrait of a man by Franz Hals, which hangs in a corner by one of the doors. Although not possessing that *brio* which is so characteristic of this great master, this dignified and beautifully conceived work is not the less, perhaps something more, attractive. Whomever it represents, the actual man seems to be gazing calmly from the canvas, not unpleased, we may suppose, at the notice which his elaborately embroidered sleeve (a marvel of skilful technique) evokes. What seems to be the companion picture, a portrait of a woman, hangs in the Duchess's Boudoir, and it is a hardly less satisfying work, although the height at which it is hung detracts seriously from the possibility of a proper consideration of its merits. It is to be hoped that in any re-arrangement of the pictures that may be made, these two works will be hung together in the good light that they deserve.

Among the other pictures in the Boudoir where the Hals hangs, the chief are of the Dutch school; thus there are examples of Berghem, an unusually full and beautiful canvas, and Both, with that ever warm glow over the landscape which he borrowed from Italy; a pair of particularly fine Canalettis; characteristic scenes in Venice; and the interior of a church by Steenwyck, showing that remarkable architectural skill in drawing, and clever management of shadows in which his chief rivals are the Peter Neefs of his own day and the Bosboom of ours. There are besides, among others, a Wouvermanns, with his inevitable white horse; and

¹ She was Lady Margaret Russell, third daughter of Francis, Earl of Bedford.

² In Sir Joshua's *List of Sitters* for this year, Lord Richard has against his name the words, "on a visit to Lord Darnley at Cobham"; so it is probable that some sittings were given there, when the painter was a fellow guest, a not infrequent practice with Reynolds.

ships in a calm, which is labelled Van de Velde, but is more probably one of Abraham Storck's masterly seascapes.

The Green Drawing Room is notable as possessing two of the finest Salvator Rosas in existence; one, a beautiful landscape, with remarkable cloud effects that might even have reconciled Ruskin to the work of this painter, and free from those exaggerated shadows that so often detract from the beauty of his work; the other, the famous "Jacob's Ladder," than which, it is probable, he never produced, nor could produce, anything finer. There is also a very fine "Samson and Delilah," by Tintoretto, in which the painter approaches as nearly to Titian in warmth of colouring as it was possible perhaps for him ever to do. As Mr. Strong, in his prefatory note to *The Masterpieces in the Duke of Devonshire's Collection*, remarks, "While others seem to be content to recite the preliminaries or the sequel of an occurrence, Tintoretto seizes the critical point. Moreover, he is apt, as in this case, to lower the centre of gravity until all the figures are drawn into a downward curve."

For the rest, there are a pair of portraits by Rubens in his earliest manner, with little promise of the daring brush-sweep that was to characterise his later touch; and examples of Ruysdael, Wouvermanns, and Berghem, as well as an interesting work by Pietro da Cortona.

Such rooms as the late Duke's Sitting Room, lined with bookcases, and still bearing evidences of the activity and innumerable interests that have, alas! so recently been cut short; as well as the late Duke's Bed Room, are too much in the nature of private apartments to allow of any detailed treatment; but I may note, in the former, the beautiful miniature full-length portrait of the Dowager Duchess, as Duchess of Manchester, which stands on one of the tables; and the wonderful Empire furniture in the latter, as well as the fine landscape, suffused with the light of the dying sun, by Annibale Caracci, and the very curious presentment of Gabrielle d'Estrées, her sister, and child with its nurse, which as a piece of historical portraiture has a value that it can hardly claim as a work of art.

But of all the splendid rooms in Devonshire House, not even excepting the Great Ball Room, the Saloon is in point of elaborate decoration the most remarkable. We seem here to be entering one of those gorgeous apartments which the wealth and luxury of Venice, at its great period, could alone conceive, and the pencil of Veronese was alone able to perpetuate. But, notwithstanding the massive nature of the gilding and carving, the colossal mirrors framed on Brobdingnagian principles, the domed ceiling rich with painted wreaths and festoons of flowers and a thousand arabesques, in the midst of which the ducal coronet and crest

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is displayed, and the "*Cavendo Tutus*," the Cavendish family motto, seems to take on itself another significance by reason of the magnificence which has resulted from the systematic following of its advice, the room has no appearance of heaviness, no trace of being over-loaded by decorative artifices; and this is undoubtedly due to the fact that its proportions are so perfect, as well they may be, when we know that Kent designed it, and Lord Burlington gave his consummate advice on its arrangement and embellishment; indeed, it is possible that the Saloon is the most complete and characteristic specimen extant of Kent's talent and his chief patron's refined taste. A few portraits hang here as *sopra portas*, notably the well-known three-quarter-length of the first Duke of Devonshire by Sir Godfrey Kneller; Lord and Lady Burlington by the same painter; Dr. Tillotson, and a portrait of, I suggest in the absence of authoritative information, the second Duke of Ormonde.

Beyond those I have specifically mentioned there are numbers of fine pictures scattered through this great palace, to which nothing short of a complete catalogue could do justice; but, in spite of the number of canvases that hang on the walls, the Devonshire collection as a whole must be studied not only here but at Chatsworth, and in half-a-dozen other princely residences belonging to the head of the Cavendish family. Thus at Chatsworth is now to be seen—for it was some time ago removed from Devonshire House—the original *Liber Veritatis* of Claude de Lorraine; about which, although it be rather outside my subject, I must say a word.

This remarkable collection of drawings owed its origin to the fact that even during Claude's lifetime his works were so highly esteemed and sought after, that it paid many artists to copy his pictures, and to pass off spurious paintings as genuine examples of his brush. In order, therefore, to leave an absolute test of the genuineness of his own work, Claude made these sketches, so that copies might at once be known by their not being included among these drawings. On the back of each is his monogram, the place where the original was painted, and generally the name of the patron for whom it was executed, while he not infrequently gives the date of the year in which it was completed, and never fails to set his "*Claudio fecit*" upon the work. On the back of the first drawing appear these words in a curious *mélange* of Italian and bad French, written by the painter himself: "*Andi io dagosto 1677. Ce livre Anpartien a moy que je faict durant ma vie Claudio Gillé, dit le Lorraine. A Roma ce 23 Aos 1680.*" We may smile at the indifferent linguistic skill displayed, but the value of this record is beyond computation. The fate of this invaluable volume is a sad commentary on

the value of testamentary wishes. Claude left in his will, directions that the book should remain for ever as an heirloom in his family, and his first descendants so carefully regarded his desire that although Cardinal d'Estrées, the French Ambassador at Rome, did everything he could to get possession of it, he signally failed. Later, however, the book passed to heirs who cared so little either for Claude's wishes or fame, that they sold the work to a French jeweller for 200 scudi—a mere nothing! The Frenchman, in turn, disposed of it to a Dutch dealer, from whom it passed into the collection of the Duke of Devonshire.

Besides this rarity there used to be preserved at Devonshire House volumes of engravings by Marc Antonio and other great masters of the engraver's art; and among the books, the Kemble collection of early English plays, for which the sixth Duke gave what now seems an absurdly low price—£1000—which was originally housed here, is now also at Chatsworth.

Apart from these rarities, the contents of Devonshire House—the wonderful Italian cabinets, the porcelain, the Sèvres and Chelsea, &c., and the beautiful French furniture, of practically all the great periods, from that of Louis Quatorze to that of the first Empire—represent not only immense wealth, but much that is best in the artistic development of many centuries and divers countries.

On the garden front of the house is the great semicircular addition designed by Wyatt, which contains the famous circular staircase, with its gilded iron-work, and its handrail of glass sometimes mistaken for crystal, and up which so many notable people have passed on those occasions when semi-royal functions have taken place beneath this hospitable and splendid roof.

The grounds at the back of Devonshire House are an excellent specimen of what artistic landscape gardening can effect, even in London, where there is, as here, sufficient material to work on. They have, too, the advantage of being bounded on the north by those of Lansdowne House, which help to carry on the continuity of verdure which in summer spreads itself before the windows of the mansion. The division of the two properties is formed by Lansdowne Passage, running from Berkeley Street to Curzon Street, at either end of which short cut, which, by-the-bye, is much below the street level and is entered by steps, are the iron bars set up at the end of the eighteenth century, in consequence of a highwayman having ridden his horse along it and up these steps, and thus escaping his pursuers.

For many years the Piccadilly front of Devonshire House was as much hidden by a blank wall as was old Harcourt House; but in 1897 the

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beautiful gates which now so greatly improve it, and are such a feature at this point of the thoroughfare, were brought here from the ducal suburban residence—villa was the former inadequate style of such places, beloved of early topographers—at Chiswick. Not always did they bear the arms of the Cavendish family, with its punning motto, for they originally contained the crest of the Percevals, and adorned the residence of the second Lord Egmont at Turnham Green, which property afterwards passed into the possession of Lord Heathfield, the well-known soldier, and Governor of Gibraltar. On his death the house gradually fell into neglect, and was finally demolished in 1838, when the gates were purchased by the sixth Duke of Devonshire, and set up at the entrance to Chiswick House, where they remained until their removal to their present position.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE GRAND STAIRCASE, DORCHESTER HOUSE.

CHAPTER XI

DORCHESTER HOUSE

PARK LANE is synonymous with worldly riches and fashionable life. Down its entire extent, from where it joins Oxford Street to the point at which it reaches Hamilton Place, great houses jostle each other in bewildering profusion on its eastern side, while on the west lies the Park with its mass of verdure and, during the season, its kaleidoscopic ever-shifting glow of brilliant colour.

In Queen Anne's reign this fair scene was a dreary and dirty by-road, known as "the lane leading from Piccadilly to Tyburn," and later as Tyburn Lane, its designation being derived, of course, from Tyburn Tree, the gallows that stood close to its north end. Even so late as 1749, when Lord Chesterfield built his beautiful house, this part of London was so desolate and waste that his lordship found himself literally in the wilds; and, as we have seen, he told those friends who smiled at his being so far out of London, that he would be obliged to keep a watch-dog, as he was in the midst of thieves and murderers. But the very fact of such a leader of the *ton*, building a fine residence here, coupled with Sir Richard Grosvenor's slightly earlier development of his vast property a little to the north, brought this part of the town into fashion, and Rocque's plan of 1748, shows the main streets of Mayfair at least laid out, if as yet they were not actually built. The latter years of George III.'s reign were, however, to see great advances made in building in Park Lane itself; the abolition of Tyburn as a place of punishment, in 1783,¹ in favour of Newgate, undoubtedly helped to relieve the neighbourhood of a most unsatisfactory *incubus*, and with the removal of the sinister "tree" an improvement took place both in the thoroughfare, and the character and status of those who lived in it.²

The name of Tyburn, which was derived from the two bournes or

¹ John Austin was the last person executed here, November 7, 1783.

² The two sons of Bushnall, the eccentric sculptor, were living here in a house which had belonged to their father, in the early years of the eighteenth century. Vertue records visiting the old place, which was full of sculpture and pictures crowded together as in a warehouse, in 1728.

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streams which met where the Marble Arch now stands, gradually gave place to the more euphonious and appropriate Park Lane ; but " Lane " it has always been, and probably will always be, in spite of the inappropriateness of such a designation for the most fashionable residential street in London. To-day as we walk along it we can see for ourselves what a substantial claim it has to be considered in this light. Even its small houses, and many are mere wedges as it were slipped in between more commodious residences, have an air of being prosperous and self-satisfied ; its large mansions, Londonderry House, Grosvenor House, Brook House, and Dudley House, or the more modern erections for which South African finance has been responsible, such as the late Mr. Barnato's house, now the residence of Sir Edward Sassoon, and the late Mr. Alfred Beit's reproduction of an old English country mansion, are a sight to see, as well as an objective for vituperation on the part of stump-orators in the adjacent Park who settle the affairs of the nation with apparently complete satisfaction to themselves. But of all the great houses in Park Lane, none equal—none, indeed, approach, in splendour—Dorchester House, which may, I think, without hyperbole, be considered the finest private dwelling in London, as well as London's most graceful and beautiful attempt at modern domestic architecture.

It stands in magnificent isolation, so far, indeed, as any building in a crowded and fashionable part of our great city can do so ; it seems to have shouldered out of existence streets and smaller tenements ; it sets a proud foot on the very thoroughfare itself ; sure of its power to impress, it appears to court observation and to challenge critical scrutiny ; and yet if it can be supposed capable of wonder, it cannot but wonder at finding itself—an Italian palace—placed under an alien sky, and to see, not the Tiber or the Arno, but the mud of London flowing at its feet. It is almost sad to see this exotic from a fairer clime ;

"Where the baked cicala dies of drouth,"

taking on, year by year, a deeper tone of melancholy from the manifold accretions of the great city, and vainly hoping, as it were, to once more return to " the land of lands," whose spirit is perpetuated in its flowing lines.

Dorchester House, of which Augustus Hare very properly says that it is " an imitation, not (like most English buildings) a caricature of the best Italian models," was built for Mr. R. S. Holford, after the designs of Vulliamy, during the years 1851–53, and was erected on the site of an older house, bearing the same name, which had belonged to the Earls

of Dorchester.¹ The history of the old mansion during the Dorchester régime is wrapt in obscurity ; but later it was occupied by the notorious third Marquis of Hertford, who married Maria Fagniani, the adopted daughter of George Selwyn, and who died here in 1842, some years after which event Mr. Holford purchased the property, pulled down the old mansion, and built the present stately pleasure house on its site.

The massive building forms a parallelogram, being over 100 feet in width by 135 feet in depth, and indicates, in its effective *façade* facing the Park, the elaborate carvings in the cornice, and the large amount of detail discernible in its exterior, the care and judgment bestowed upon it by the architect, as well as the lavish expenditure of Mr. Holford. In an article in *The Builder*, devoted to the consideration of Dorchester House occurs the following passage, which, as giving some interesting technical details of the fabric, I here quote : " This mansion is a very good specimen of masonry, and is built for long endurance. The external walls are 3 feet 10 inches thick, with a cavity of about 5 inches, and the proportion of stone is great, and the bonders numerous ; the stones are all dowelled together with slate dowells ; and throughout, the greatest care appears to have been taken by the architect to ensure more than usually sound construction. If the New Zealander, who is to gaze on the deserted site of fallen London in some distant time to come, sees nothing else standing in this neighbourhood, he will certainly find the weather-tinted walls of Dorchester House erect and faithful, and will, perhaps, strive to discover the meaning on the shield beneath the balconies, ' R.S.H., ' that he may communicate his speculations to some Tasmanian Society of Antiquaries."

In front of Dorchester House is a triangular fore-court, enclosed by a massive stone wall which surrounds the house, and has a lodge at the entrance where Deanery Street runs into Park Lane.

It is obvious that a house whose solidity of construction and external details have been so carefully thought out, should show in its interior a commensurate completeness as well as a wealth of homogeneous details. When Dr. Waagen visited this country and inspected its great galleries of art, Mr. Holford was erecting this palace, largely for the reception of the magnificent collection of pictures which he had then already brought together, and which was at that time temporarily lodged in Sir Thomas Lawrence's old residence in Russell Square, where the great art critic saw it ; now, however, these gems of art repose on the walls that were

¹ Joseph Damer, born 1718, created Earl of Dorchester 1792, married Lady Caroline Sackville, daughter of first Duke of Dorset, and was succeeded in 1798, by his son George Damer, Earl of Dorchester, born 1746, died 1808. Dorchester House in Lord Milton's (afterwards Earl of Dorchester) time, owing to its exclusiveness, was called " Milton's Paradise Lost."

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built largely for their reception, and the glowing tints of Titian and the flowing draperies of Veronese take on an added beauty from the fact that their surroundings are so strictly in keeping with them, that they might still be hanging in one of those Venetian palaces from whence they came.

But numerous as are the pictures in Dorchester House, the immense size of the various state rooms and their number, have the happy effect of enabling each picture to hang at a reasonable distance from its neighbour, and thus is avoided that overcrowding which so greatly detracts from the pleasure of inspecting such works of art in many great houses whose picture-galleries are filled to overflowing.

The great staircase at Dorchester House, over which the late George Richmond was so enthusiastic, is indeed a thing to wonder at, there being nothing comparable to it in London, with the exception, perhaps, of that in Stafford House; it occupies the centre of the house, and is lighted from above, and from the gallery round it open that remarkable range of apartments—the Saloon, the Green Drawing Room, the Red Drawing Room, and the State Drawing Room—in which the ceilings and other decorations are from the hands of Italian artists, and the beautiful chimney-pieces are by Alfred Stevens, and probably represent the finest work that great artist ever achieved. In these rooms hang some of the notable pictures of the great masters, Titian and Tintoretto, Velasquez and Vandyck and Murillo, Rembrandt and Claude and Cuyyp and Ruysdael.

In the Saloon, which it will be convenient to examine first, hangs over the fireplace, and let into the magnificently carved marble overmantel, Vandyck's portrait of the Marchesa Balbi, one of the painter's greatest achievements, and owing much of that glorious golden tone which suffuses it, to his study of the Venetian masters during his sojourn at Genoa. Only less luminous are Dosso Dossi's full-length of Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, and the Philip IV. by Velasquez, a later portrait of that monarch than the fine one we shall presently come to in the Red Drawing Room. In the Saloon also hang a pair of portraits by Angelo Allori, commonly called Bronzino, representing Cosmo I., Duke of Tuscany, and his wife Eleanor, daughter of Don Pedro of Toledo, which, it is probable, the painter never surpassed; while the great Titian is responsible for the head of, it is supposed, one of the Dukes of Milan of the Sforza family, as well as for the portrait of a Venetian lady. By Domenichino, there is a St. Lawrence in this room, and a portrait of Murillo by himself, and Rembrandt gives us a head of a man, that of a well-known merchant of Amsterdam, Marten Looten, dated 1623, which came from Cardinal Fesch's collection, and which Waagen praises highly for its "natural

colouring and delicacy of feeling"; and close by is Annibale Caracci's "Susanna and the Elders," which can hardly be said to show up well beside the masterpieces here; while two beautiful landscapes must not escape our attention; one by Gaspar Poussin, by whom there are at least three others in the collection, and the other by Richard Wilson, the first of the great English landscape painters, whose hard classicism could not detract from his natural genius.

The pictures, of which there are over twenty, in the Green Drawing Room are no less notable, and exhibit, if possible, a still greater catholicity of taste than those in the Saloon. Here is an "Adoration" by Gaudenzio Ferrari, commonly called Gaudenzio Milanese, who is said by some to have been the pupil of Perugino, and by others of Luini, but of whose work, the best that exists is by common consent traced to the study of the paintings of Leonardo. Of this altar-piece, Waagen points out "the well-balanced composition, the noble feeling in the heads, the tender and clear tone of the flesh, and the equally sustained and careful treatment." The "Virgin and Child," said to be by Andrea del Sarto, which hangs close by, is, according to the same authority, more probably a copy by Jacopo da Empoli; in any case we know that the latter carefully studied the productions of the greater man, and was so excellent a copyist that even the best judges have been deceived by his work.

There also hang in this room, a "Holy Family" by Bonifazio, an interesting work, although one must, of course, go to the churches and palaces of Venice to see the master's finest achievements; and a beautiful "Virgin and Child" by Perugino, that delightful painter whose greatest glory, however, will ever be that he had Raphael for his pupil. Here is also a "Magdalen" by Guercino, and another by Domenichino; while a beautiful little "Virgin and Child" by Luini, and a "Holy Family" by Sassoferrato are also worth most careful attention.

Portraits by Paul Veronese, Tintoretto, and Palma Vecchio represent the Venetian school, and a head by Luini curiously reminds one, in many of its characteristics, of the work of the great Leonardo who is supposed to have been the painter's master. Besides these there are examples of the work of Lorenzo Lotto,¹ the pupil of Giovanni Bellini; Schiavone, whose beauty of colouring was due to his careful study of the work of Titian; Mabuse, whom our Henry VII. patronised; and to leap over some intervening centuries, there also hangs here the picture, by Sir Joshua, of Lady Townshend, one of the three beautiful daughters of Sir

¹ The portrait of a lady with a little dog was formerly attributed to this painter, but has since been supposed to be the work of Pietro Luzzo, called Morto da Feltro.

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William Montgomery, who was married to the first Marquis Townshend in 1776; and with these there is a portrait of an old lady by Greuze, but very unlike in style his characteristic productions.

Teniers's well-known "Bonnet blanc," representing a group of rustics playing cards, which gains its title from a white cap hanging on the chair occupied by the principal figure, is also here, as is a "Village Fair" by Wouvermanns; a poetical though rather dark landscape by Gaspar Poussin; a Crucifixion by Guido; and a landscape by Salvator Rosa; there is also an interesting study of the "Raising of the Cross" by Rubens, a sketch for the Triptych in Antwerp Cathedral, of which there is a somewhat similar drawing in the Louvre; but the gem of the room is the glorious Cuyp, a "View of Dort," which is flooded with that glorious golden light which characterises the magnificent "Landing of Prince Maurice at Dordrecht," in Lord Ellesmere's collection. The Dorchester House example of this great master is a long picture, and is said to have once been divided down the centre; if this was so, it is lucky that the two portions have been so carefully joined that the vandalism is not apparent. Well may Waagen say of this superb picture, that in it Cuyp "outdoes himself in the delicate harmony of gradations and the enchanting transparency of tones with which he expresses the sunny stillness of the scene"!

In the Red Drawing Room there is a similar profusion of fine pictures, but here the works are nearly wholly confined to the Dutch and Flemish schools, although there is "A Man holding a Skull" by Murillo, and two Velasquezs; one, a portrait of Philip the Fourth, and the other a magnificent full-length of the Duc d'Olivares. The elaboration of contour, which is so distinctive a note in this fine picture, has been observed by Sir Walter Armstrong. The great statesman is here represented, dressed in black, against a dark background, and holding in his right hand the wand of office as Master of the Horse; the picture was painted between 1615 and 1623, and the head greatly resembles that executed by Rubens, probably in 1628, which was formerly at Hamilton Palace. The Philip IV., although apparently an earlier work of the painter, and showing, therefore, somewhat obviously certain conventions of style which characterised Velasquez's more immature conceptions, is an elaborate piece of work, and shows us the King as a young man, holding a baton in his right hand, and dressed ready to take the field.

But perhaps the most remarkable canvas in the room is Vandyck's famous full-length of Scaliger, one of the Spanish Ambassadors at the Congress of Westphalia, in which all the painter's transcendent merits

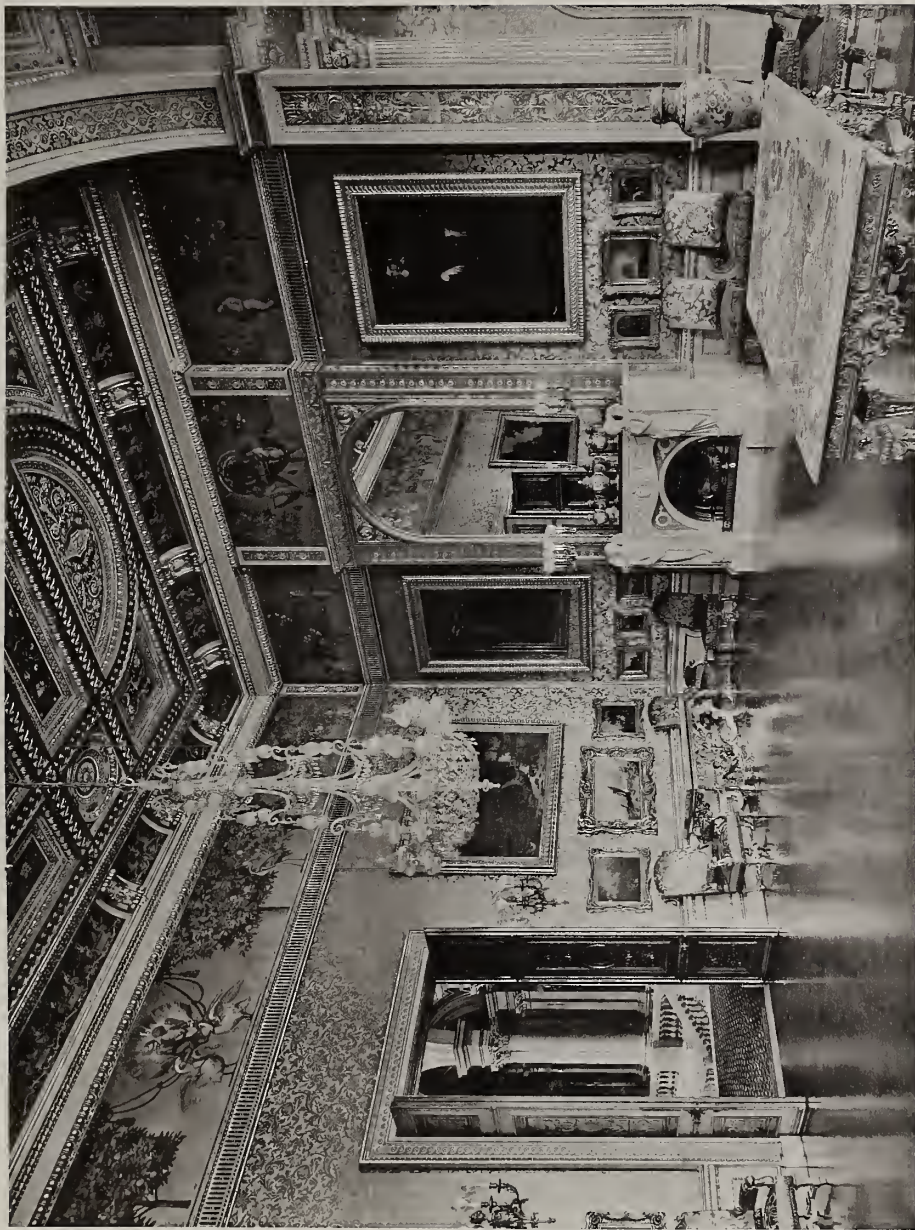


Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE RED DRAWING ROOM, DORCHESTER HOUSE.

as a portrait-painter are brought into full play, and his great qualities of tone and perfect draughtsmanship, are exhibited in a remarkable manner. When I speak of this as being perhaps the most noticeable picture in this apartment I do not overlook the fact that Rembrandt is here represented by a fine full face of Titus van Ryn, painted, according to M. Michel, about 1660, which has some affinity to the earlier representation of Titus (1655) formerly in the Kahn collection.

Besides these great works are a number of extraordinarily fine examples of the Dutch school, by such men as Ostade, and Karl du Jardin; Van der Velde, and Wouvermanns; Teniers, Backhuysen, and Both. Ruysdael is represented by a landscape known as the "Coup de Soleil," which was exhibited at Manchester in 1857, and in the "Old Masters" thirty-seven years later; Paul Potters' so-called "Rabbit Warren," signed, and dated 1647, also hangs here, as does the superb "Water Mill" by Hobbema, executed in 1663, which was once in Hamilton Palace, and for which Mr. Holford paid the high price of over £4000. Close by, in somewhat curious juxtaposition, hangs one of Pater's *insouciant* canvases.

Naturally the pictures which I have noted do not exhaust the remarkable collection at Dorchester House; to do that would require something approaching the minute investigation which such men as Waagen and Smith have paid to the artistic treasures heaped up in the great houses of this country; but I hope I have succeeded in giving some idea of the beauty as well as the catholicity of the Holford collection; to do more would be to go beyond the scope of this book. Nor is it possible for me to do more than mention the other artistic treasures enshrined in Dorchester House, such as the marble busts, one of Henry IV. of France, in black marble, being particularly noticeable; the magnificently carved ebony cabinet of Italian work which stands in the Corridor, or the Luca della Robbia plaques that hang under the loggia of the Entrance Hall; but, above all, the well-nigh priceless collection of books, in which the productions of the presses of Caxton, Wynken de Worde, and Pynsen, are only equalled by the extraordinary number and value of the block-books and illuminated missals. One of the chief of the great purchases made by Mr. Holford was the splendid library collected by Lord Vernon, the great Dante scholar and enthusiast; and among the treasures at Dorchester House will be found practically every work of importance printed in Italy before 1500, including those books illustrated both on copper and on wood, such as, among the former, the *Monte Sante di Dio* of 1472, and among the latter the famous Naples Æsop and the *Trilocolo* of Boccaccio of a few years earlier.

A feature of the wondrous assemblage is the number of works printed

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on vellum, notably a copy of the *Hypnerotomachia*, of which there is also a large paper copy of exceeding rarity. Here, too, is a Terence printed in 1496, and a Horace dated two years later, and printed at Strasburg by Johann Reinhard; Jenson's large Vulgate printed on vellum at Venice, in 1479, and the French translation of the *Golden Legend*, also on vellum, published by Verard, in 1488, as well as the English version, printed in 1527. There is, also, a splendid series of classical works in all languages, and famous editions of well-known books; from folios of elephantine size, containing the works of Piranesi and David Roberts; to the dear "dumpy twelves" of the once so popular Elzevir Press, including that rarest of its productions, the famous *Pâtissier Français*, of which the scarcity is not surprising, when we know that it was the "Mrs. Beeton" of the period, and was constantly referred to by seventeenth-century cooks, and was much more frequently to be found in the kitchen than in the library. Here may also be seen such gems as the first editions of the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Complete Angler*, *inter alia*, while there are two priceless volumes of *Americana*, one, a fat little volume of those scarce tracts for which battle is done at Sotheby's and Puttick's on the rare occasions when any of them come into the market; and the other the original large paper copy of John Smith's *History of Virginia*, presented by the author to the Cordwainers' Company which sent him out there, and containing a remarkable and, of course, unique letter of dedication to that body.

The MSS. date from the ninth to the sixteenth century, and are another proof, if one were wanted, of their collector's admirable discrimination and catholicity of taste; among them I may mention the *Livre d'Heures* of Anne of Bretagne, and the Venetian MS. dated about 1510, and signed by one Benedetto Bordone; as well as the wonderful ninth-century Gospels, written in gold; and a thousand other rarities over which the spirits of Heber and Beckford must surely hover, if the ghosts of those mighty bibliophiles ever revisit the glimpses of the moon.¹

All these works are gorgeously clothed by the great binders of the last three centuries, who have set on them the seal of their artistic feeling and consummate skill, and many of the volumes have had a *provenance* from the shelves of some famous bibliophile whose most loving care for them could hardly have desired a more splendid resting-place than the library of Dorchester House, where they are locked away in splendid security, and, unfortunately, for a time at least, seem destined to fulfil but a part of their destiny—that of being merely decorative objects.

¹ This year (1908) the Burlington Fine Arts Club is holding an exhibition of some of the MSS. from Dorchester House.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE DINING ROOM, DORCHESTER HOUSE.

With such a lining as is afforded by these rows upon rows of varied colour and glittering decoration, the dullest room would look palatial, but here the beauty of the apartments, leading one from the other, in which these riches are housed, is in keeping with the value of the contents; for not only are the bookcases beautifully decorated in Italian designs, but in what little wall space there is uncovered by books hang some fine pictures; and when the full light of Park Lane floods the rooms through their many long windows, there is revealed such an artistic bookman's paradise as might have gladdened the heart, if it did not excite the envy, of Peiresc or De Thou.

In the Dining Room, on the other hand, the beauty of the apartment relies solely on the decorative effect of the walls and ceiling. No pictures hang here, and the one touch of colour comes from the cerulean blue of the ceiling, across which birds pass in flight and help to carry us to the Italy of which the mural decorations in mahogany and gold are a further characteristic note.

There are, however, two remarkable objects in this room which arrest the eye immediately we enter it. One is the famous mantelpiece of Bardiglia marble with its two immense caryatids in Carrara, almost Michael Angeloesque in their superb proportions and flowing draperies, which is probably the masterpiece of Stevens who designed it; the other, the elaborate sideboard, the work of the same consummate master, which stands in a recess at the end of the room, and carries out in its wonderful detail the scheme of the apartment.

Mr. Holford had the highest admiration for the genius of Stevens, and was indeed his chief patron; when Dorchester House was in course of erection, he employed him not only to design this wonderful mantelpiece and sideboard, but to execute other decorative work about the mansion; thus the mouldings of three of the doors were Stevens's work, as well as the frames, carved in arabesques, &c., of no less than eight large mirrors. The magnificent chimney-piece of Carrara marble in the Saloon, only less beautiful than that in the Dining Room, was also from his hand; while of one room commenced by the great artist, it is said that Mr. Holford was kept out of it for fifteen years, and at Stevens's death it still remained unfinished, and was preserved as he had left it, in memory of one who had done so much to make the house unique and beautiful. Most of Stevens's designs were commenced about 1860, and completed in 1873, and the details of some of them are reproduced in Mr. Hugh Stannus's *Alfred Stevens and his Work*, published in 1891.¹

Other decorative work at Dorchester House was executed by various artists under the direction of Sir Coutts Lindsay.

From what I have said about this great house it will be seen that there is a homogeneity about its internal as well as external decoration which justified me, I think, in calling it an Italian palace dropped on to an alien soil; its contents are also in keeping, except that the purist might object to the presence of works by the Dutch masters in close proximity to those by great Italian painters; but this is almost inevitable where catholicity of taste is combined with artistic appreciation; and when one remembers the noble Rembrandts, the sylvan beauty of the Hobbema, the light that never was on land or sea, with which Cuyp has, as it were, flooded his "View of Dort," even the most critical will be ready to forgive an anachronism for the sake of the beauties that cause it.

When we have seen the Dorchester House collection we have gazed on some of the finest Rembrandts and Vandycks in existence; and we have passed through a collection of Dutch pictures which is extraordinarily complete, the only masters of importance absent from it being Terburg and Metsu, Jan Steen, and the rare Vermeer of Delft. Besides those artists to whose work I have previously referred, there are examples of Gonzales Coques, Paul Potter, Van der Neer, in this case a skating scene, and not one of those moonlight effects for which he was famous, Mieris, Rubens, and De Vos, to mention but these.

But what will chiefly strike the visitor to Dorchester House, is undoubtedly the exquisite taste and wide range of artistic sympathy which was so characteristic of the late Mr. Holford. Nothing, provided it was first-rate, was rejected by him, unless the exigencies of the house prevented his hanging a picture in such a position as, in his mature opinion, it should be hung; but given such unfavourable conditions, he has been known to refuse such masterpieces as Bellini's "Doge Lonedano," and the great Francian "Entombment" Altar-piece with the *Pieta lunette*, which now hangs in the National Gallery. With this purity of taste and exquisite sensitiveness to artistic propriety went hand in hand that remarkable catholicity of which the collection at Dorchester House is but one example; to gauge this trait thoroughly one would also have to study the splendid gallery at Westonbirt, in Gloucestershire, a number of the pictures from which magnificent place were recently exhibited in the "Old Masters" at Burlington House.

Nothing, perhaps, shows more clearly and forcibly than the Holford collection how masterpieces, of whatever school and period, hang together with an extraordinary fitness; the collocation of such works of art in the Tribune at Florence or the *Salon carré* in the Louvre shows this, while the collections at Dorchester House and Westonbirt further prove it.

In Dorchester House every picture seems to occupy its appointed

place ; there is here no crowding, no confusion. Many galleries contain one masterpiece for half-a-dozen indifferent works ; but here, as, too, in Grosvenor House, there is a rightness about every work hanging on the walls, which points to a trained mind in its acquisition and an aptitude for selection which creates taste out of enthusiasm. Nor does this excellent characteristic show itself only in the pictorial treasures housed here ; the decorations of every room, every piece of furniture or *objet d'art* which is contained in the mansion is eloquent of this perfect discrimination ; while the magnificent collection of prints and etchings, now dispersed, and the wonderful library of printed books and illuminated missals, help to further prove it beyond all question.

CHAPTER XII

GROSVENOR HOUSE

THE more or less uniform regularity of Upper Grosvenor Street is broken towards its upper end by a magnificent open stone screen of Roman Doric design, which, with its two carriage entrances, extends no less than 110 feet. The pediments of this screen bear the Grosvenor arms, and above the entrances for pedestrians are sculptured the four Seasons, although the sceptical might well question whether any residence in London enjoys more than two, or at the most three, of these divisions of the year. Between the columns appear massive candelabra, which, like the gates, are of elaborate metal work, sculptured in foliage and fruit and flower work, intertwined with figures and armorial designs. This really beautiful piece of work was designed by T. Cundy in 1842, and forms the entrance to the Duke of Westminster's town residence, which is known to all Londoners as Grosvenor House, and as one of those great mansions which it is the pleasure and privilege of their noble owners to throw open to the public when any scheme of charity or artistic endeavour is toward.

The mansion itself faces south, and is curiously early Victorian in design, having some resemblance, although on a far larger scale, to Kingston House, Knightsbridge, where the semicircular projecting verandah seems to challenge more modern methods, and to assert some claims for an architectural style which has long been supposed to have "seen its best day," as the saying is. In curious contrast with this main building is the great Picture Gallery, which projects from the west side of the house, and extends almost to the frontage of the property on Park Lane. This Ball Room or Picture Gallery, for it is used as both, was also the work of Cundy, and was erected at the same time as the great entrance in Upper Grosvenor Street. It consists of a Corinthian colonnade, with six statues at intervals between the columns, and an attic; and is based on the design of Trajan's Forum at Rome; on the *acroteria*, to use an architectural term, which means, for the uninitiated, the pedestals for statues or similar decorations at the apex, or lower corners,



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE DRAWING ROOM, GROSVENOR HOUSE.

of a pediment, a balustrade runs along, and vases break the regularity of this; while between the columns sculptured festoons of flowers and fruit help to further relieve the design, and to give it an effect of richness.

As in the case of several other great London mansions, the earlier history of Grosvenor House is wrapt in some obscurity. It would appear to have been originally built for William Henry, Duke of Gloucester, a younger brother of George III., and to have been first known, in consequence, as Gloucester House. The Duke was born in 1743, and died in 1805, having married secretly, in 1766, Maria Walpole, Dowager Countess of Waldegrave. This marriage was made known in 1772, on the passing of the Royal Marriage Act, and in consequence of the King's anger the Duke and Duchess lived abroad for a number of years, certainly as late as 1787, in which year a letter to Mrs. Fitzherbert from the Duke is extant, dated from Florence. It is therefore probable that Gloucester House was built at some period subsequent to this date, when the Duke and Duchess had returned, and were living in London.¹ On the death of the Duke in 1805, the property was taken over by the second Earl of Grosvenor, who had succeeded to the title three years earlier.

For a London dwelling the grounds attached to Grosvenor House are of very considerable size, and extend from Upper Grosvenor Street to Mount Street, occupying the large space between Park Street and Park Lane. That they should cover this large area is appropriate, for in this fashionable quarter of the town the Grosvenor family have long possessed immense property, as the result of the marriage of Sir Thomas Grosvenor, the third baronet, with Mary, daughter and heiress of Alexander Davies, of Ebury, in Middlesex. It was their son, Sir Richard, the fourth baronet, that "mighty builder" who, about fifty years later, developed this valuable estate to such advantage, and who, among other work, laid out Grosvenor Square. His nephew, Richard Grosvenor, son of Sir Robert Grosvenor, who was born on June 18, 1731, and succeeded as seventh baronet in 1755, was created, six years later, Baron Grosvenor of Eaton, and was further raised in dignity, in 1784, with the titles of Viscount Belgrave and Earl Grosvenor. His son, Robert, succeeded to the titles in 1802, and in 1831 was created Marquis of Westminster, having married, in 1794, Lady Eleanor Egerton, only daughter and heiress of Thomas, first Earl of Wilton. Although this marriage helped to further aggrandise the family in wealth and influence, which, so far at least as the latter was concerned, was further enhanced by the marriages of the second and third Marquises, to daughters of the first and second

¹ The Duke was living in a small house known as the Pavilions, in Hampton Court Park in 1795, but of course this is quite consonant with his then having also a London residence.

Dukes of Sutherland respectively, the chief source of the enormous wealth of the late and present Dukes of Westminster (for the third Marquis, grandfather of the present holder of the title, was created a Duke in 1874) was laid by the purchase by the first Lord Grosvenor, in 1761, of that large tract of what was then merely marshy ground, but which is now covered with houses and streets known collectively as Belgravia; in early days, and indeed up to 1826, it was termed the Five Fields, where it is a question whether ague and rheumatism were less to be feared than the foot-pads that then haunted this insanitary spot. The enterprise and what may, I think, be termed the genius, of Cubitt, converted this morass (for it was little better), by a system of scientific drainage, into a healthy neighbourhood, and the splendid houses and squares with which he developed it have made it not only habitable but one of the most fashionable localities in London.

This long parenthesis has taken us a considerable way from Grosvenor House, in which, if we return to it, we shall find a collection of magnificent pictures, and works of art, second to hardly any in the metropolis. The founder of this superb assemblage was that Richard, first Earl Grosvenor, whom I have mentioned above, as succeeding to the family baronetcy in 1755. No sooner had he done so than he began to emulate the then relatively few, other than royal, picture collectors, buying largely, and as is frequently the case with those indulging in a new hobby, often not very judiciously.¹ As, however, he did not confine his purchases to any particular school, he managed to add to his gallery some excellent works, especially as price was not a matter of moment to him. Thus at the dispersal of Sir Luke Schaub's collection, in 1758, he purchased Guido's "Infant Christ,"² and Charles Lebrun's "Alexander in the Tent of Darius"; giving 300 guineas for the former, and £127 for the latter; prices which were, at that time, considered excessive. Five years later he commissioned Mr. Dalton, then about to set out for Italy to make purchases for George III., whose librarian he was, to buy pictures for him; the result being two works by Ludovico Caracci and Baroccio, among others. The former represents "The Vision of St. Francis," and is an altogether beautiful work; while the latter, called "La Vierge à l'Ecuelle," is obviously inspired by Correggio's "Madonna della Scodella."

Among the other works brought together by the first Earl Grosvenor, among many of but second-rate importance, were "The Bear Hunt"

¹ The collection was then located in Millbank House, Westminster, which had been built, about 1720, for Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, but is now no more.

² Now hanging in the Saloon; Lebrun's work is not now at Grosvenor House.

by Snyders, and the "Fortuna" by Guido,¹ a replica of the picture in the Vatican.

Thus was a nucleus formed of a gallery of old masters,² but Sir Richard Grosvenor's best investments were, undoubtedly, the works of contemporary painters, which he purchased indirectly, or for which he gave commissions directly to the artists, as will be recognised when we remember that these included works by Reynolds and Gainsborough, Northcote, Stubbs, and Wilson. By far the most important additions to the collection were, however, made by the second Earl Grosvenor, who in the year in which he moved to Grosvenor House, purchased *en bloc* the splendid collection formed by Mr. Agar-Ellis. As we shall see when examining the pictures in the various rooms at Grosvenor House, those that had this *provenance* are among some of the finest in the collection; a collection which is probably freer from indifferent work than any other in London, with the possible exception of that at Dorchester House; and of the hundred and thirty odd pictures included in the private catalogue there is hardly a single picture that might not be considered a valuable addition to any collection, and nearly every one would be a gem in an assemblage less richly endowed with carefully selected masterpieces.

In some respects the two principal works by Reynolds and Gainsborough which hang in Grosvenor House are among the best known pictures in the world; one is "Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse," the other "The Blue Boy," both of which now hang in the Drawing Room. The former great work was painted in 1784, and although the main idea of the pose is said to have been suggested by the "Isaiah" of Michael Angelo, yet Mrs. Siddons once informed Mr. Phillips "that it was the production of pure accident." "Sir Joshua," we are told, "had begun the head and figure in a different view; but while he was occupied in the preparation of some colour, she changed her position to look at a picture hanging on the wall of the room. When he again looked at her, and saw the action she had assumed, he requested her not to move; and thus arose the beautiful and expressive figure we now see in the picture."

Although Hazlitt once said of this great work: "It is neither the tragic muse nor Mrs. Siddons," Sir Joshua thought as highly of it as other great critics have done, and evidence of this is shown by the fact that he signed his name on the border of the drapery,³ telling Mrs. Siddons

¹ No. 58 and 63 in Young's *Catalogue of the Grosvenor Pictures*. The latter alone is now at Grosvenor House.

² For a complete list of the pictures as they were at that time, see Young's *Catalogue of the Pictures at Grosvenor House*, published in May 1820. This work was dedicated to Earl Grosvenor, and was prepared under his auspices; it contains etchings of 143 pictures.

³ He did the same in the case of the "Lady Cockburn," now in the National Gallery. But signing his pictures was a very rare habit with him.

that he "could not lose the honour this opportunity afforded him of going down to posterity on the hem of her garment." It is said that on one occasion when looking at the picture at Grosvenor House, Mrs. Siddons remarked that Sir Joshua wanted to work more on the face, but that she told him that if he did so, he would spoil it, whereupon he took her advice and left it untouched. The work was bought by M. de Calonne for 800 guineas, on the dispersal of whose collection, in 1795, it was purchased by W. Smith, Esq., M.P., for Norwich, for £700. He subsequently sold it to Mr. Watson Taylor, for £900; and when the Watson Taylor pictures were dispersed, in 1822, it came into the possession of Lord Grosvenor, at the price of £1760.¹ There are at least three replicas of this great work; the best known, though anything but the best, is in the Dulwich Gallery, which, according to Northcote, was not painted by Sir Joshua at all, but by one of his pupils named Score.

"The Blue Boy," painted in 1779,² is an almost equally famous work. It represents Master Jonathan Buttall, son of Mr. Buttall of Greek Street, Soho, standing at full-length, in a blue satin dress of the Stuart period; and was the outcome of a dispute between Gainsborough and other painters, particularly Sir Joshua, who laid down the axiom that a preponderance of blue in a picture was to be deprecated as spoiling a good colour scheme. One can hardly imagine a more effective rejoinder, a more telling disproof of the accuracy of this assertion, than this superlatively fine production. The canvas originally belonged to Mr. Buttall, and later to his son (the subject of the picture), on whose death it was purchased by a Mr. Nesbit, from whom it is said to have passed to George, Prince of Wales; later it became the property of Hoppner, who, however, eventually sold it to Earl Grosvenor.

I may mention here that there are at Grosvenor House two of Gainsborough's most successful landscapes; one, "The Cottage Door," the other, "A Coast Scene." They both hang in the Ante-Drawing Room; the former was purchased by the first Marquis of Westminster, at the sale of Lord de Tabley's pictures in 1828; and the other was painted specially for the first Earl Grosvenor. They are among the best of Gainsborough's work in landscape, which is, perhaps, tantamount to saying that they are among the finest landscapes in the world.

In Grosvenor House there are six stately rooms in each of which hang a number of splendid works of art, and all of which are decorated with lavishness combined with excellent taste. Every picture is separately lighted by electric light hidden behind a reflector; so that even the

¹ According to Mrs. Jameson; Mr. Redford, however, puts it at £1837.

² No. 16 in Young's *Catalogue*.

merits of those which have necessarily to be hung in a less effective position than others, can be minutely judged.

In the Dining Room there hang as many as thirty-one canvases, no less than seven of which are by Claude. Two of these works are stated by Waagen to be among the largest the artist ever painted; they are known respectively as "The Worship of the Golden Calf," and "The Sermon on the Mount," and if not to be classed with the master's greatest achievements, they still combine many of his remarkable qualities. Both came from the Agar-Ellis collection; the former being painted, on the authority of the *Liber Veritatis*, for Signor Carlo Cadillo, in 1655, although Young, in his *Catalogue of the Grosvenor Gallery*, asserts that it was executed for Sir Peter Lely,¹ and it is so stated in the private catalogue where it is also affirmed that Sir Peter had stipulated that no figures should appear, as he intended to introduce these himself, but that Claude sent him the canvas full of figures and told him he could keep it or not as he liked. Of the second picture, Mrs. Jameson states that an old lady was so filled with admiration for it that she offered Mr. Agar-Ellis a handsome annuity, merely to be allowed the loan of the canvas during her life, an anecdote one can well believe as one gazes at this consummate work.

Another pair of "Claudes" are known as "Morning," and "Evening," and are of superlative merit and beauty. Painted in 1651 (at least the latter bears this date), Mrs. Jameson supposes them to be identical with the two works which were in the Blondel de Gaguy collection, and which were sold, in 1776, for 24,000 francs. That their value increased by leaps and bounds is evidenced by the fact that, on the death of Mr. Agar-Ellis in whose collection they were, a foreign collector is said to have offered no less than £8000 for them, but Lord Grosvenor had, luckily, already forestalled this tempting bid.

Two other landscapes by the same master are known as "The Rise, and the Decline of the Roman Empire," as they represent in the middle distance Rome in its glory, and in its ruin.²

By Rembrandt, there are no less than five superb portraits in the Dining Room. Of these, the presentments of Nicholas Berghem, the painter, and of his wife, are perhaps the most interesting. Both are signed and dated 1647, and that of the artist was executed when he was about twenty-seven. There is also a superb little portrait of Rembrandt himself, representing him at about the age of twenty, habited as a soldier, which is supposed to be the most youthful of the many pictures the

¹ Mrs. Jameson doubts this, on the ground that there was no such work in the catalogue of Lely's pictures, and also from absence of any other proof.

² The latter is now removed to another room as we shall see.

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painter produced of himself. It was formerly in the collection of Calonne. Another portrait by the same master is that of a man with a hawk, dated 1643, and together with one of a lady with a fan, has evoked the wonder and admiration of critics, as it cannot fail to do that of even the ordinary untrained intelligence. These two works were, in 1809, in the collection of M. Grand-Pré, and were then valued at 40,000 francs; what their present value is, Christie's alone only knows. They were brought to this country by M. de la Hannte, from whom Earl Grosvenor purchased them, in 1820. In this room also hangs a very important example of a painter whom it is less the fashion to admire nowadays than it was formerly—Murillo; this particular work is known as “Laban seeking his Household Gods in Jacob's Tent”; and as was not unusual with the earlier painters, the subject is treated as a scene of contemporary life. *A propos* of this work, it is interesting to know that Murillo originally projected a series of subjects from the life of David, and desired Ignatio Iriarte of Seville to execute the backgrounds; he wished Iriarte to first paint the landscapes, to which he was to add the figures; but Iriarte wanted the process reversed; so, in order to get out of the *impasse*, Murillo did the whole himself, taking the subject of Laban instead of that originally intended. The work was successively in the Santiago, and Coesveldt collections, from the latter of which it passed into that of the Marquess of Villamanrique. One authority, however, states that it was sold by the Marquis of Santiago to Mr. Wallis, and passed from him, through Mr. Buchanan, to Lord Grosvenor; while there is also a tradition that when the French entered Madrid, in 1808, it was selected, with other works of art, by General Sebastiani, as part of the booty exacted.

Next to this fine work is a “Holy Family” by Ludovico Caracci, painted with a depth of tone and richness of colouring which is very unusual with this painter. This work, together with “A Young Faun in a Landscape,” by Salvator Rosa, which the first Marquis of Westminster purchased, exhausts the pictures other than those by Dutch and Flemish masters in this room. In addition to the Rembrandts, David Teniers is represented by two characteristic works; one, “A Family saying Grace”; the other, “Boers Drinking”; and there is a Van Huysum almost, if not quite, equal to the superb example of this painter in the National Gallery. This particular masterpiece was once in the Braamkemp and Geldermeester Galleries, from the latter of which it was purchased by Sir Francis Baring, about 1800. It was from the Baring collection that it was bought by George IV.; the King, however, subsequently sold it to Mr. Watson Taylor, at the sale of whose gallery, in 1822, it was purchased by Lord Grosvenor. By Rubens is a small land-

scape most minutely finished, which, according to Young, was painted before the artist went to Italy, and when he must have been about eighteen or twenty. Waagen very properly calls this beautiful little production "a real gem." It was one of the pictures originally collected by Lord Grosvenor, before he purchased the Agar-Ellis gallery, as was the Cuyp, representing a group of sheep in a pen, which hangs near it.

Among the other works here, special attention is demanded by Wouvermanns's "Horse Fair," a most exquisite and spirited work, which is signed but not dated, and which was one of the Agar-Ellis pictures; the same epithets may well be applied to the "Farm House with Cattle and Figures," by Adrian Van der Velde, dated 1658, the year in which the painter, who was then but nineteen, painted the similar picture which is now in the Peel collection. The work at Grosvenor House was originally in the galleries of M. Lorimer, the Duc de Choiseul, and the Prince de Conti, and was later among the Agar-Ellis pictures, which is a pedigree of which any work of art might be proud.

I have mentioned one Cuyp, which I confess does not move me to enthusiasm—it is so hard and dry; but another, a landscape with figures and sheep, is of very different quality, being warm and deep in tone, and in every way worthy of its painter's great reputation. There is here, too, a "View of Nimwegen," by Van Goyen, of characteristically thin *impasto*, signed and dated 1645; and a sketch by Rubens for his large picture of the "Conversion of St. Paul;" as well as a remarkably fine and very large landscape by Nicholas Berghem, dated 1656, once in the Agar-Ellis collection.

The Saloon, in which hang some of the most important of the many precious works in Grosvenor House, communicates with the Dining Room, and as that apartment does, looks out upon the ample gardens. The ceiling of this fine room is decorated in the Italian style, in neutral tints, and is so carefully subdued as not to clash with the pictures that hang on the walls; which *plafonds* over-loaded with bright decorative work are frequently apt to do. There is in this room a very beautiful mantelpiece of Carrara marble, with plaques of red marble introduced, and about the room are some magnificent examples of French furniture of the Louis Quatorze period, in the shape of cabinets, loaded with rare and costly porcelain. But I am chiefly concerned with the pictures, of which there are no less than thirty-eight by masters of the Italian, French, Spanish, Dutch, and Flemish schools; and although this collocation of the poetic spiritualities of the Italians with the more material expositions of the Dutch and Flemish masters is perhaps to be regretted, at the same

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time it is a significant fact that when a work, of whatever school it be, is a masterpiece, these seemingly opposite characteristics assimilate in a remarkable manner.

Of the Italians, Guilio Romano; Andrea del Sarto, "the faultless painter"; Benvenuto Tisio, commonly called Garofalo; Tiarini; Albano; Paul Veronese; Mazzuoli, called Parmigiano; Biscaino, and Zampieri, better known as Domenichino, are among those here represented; and if there be some doubt about the authenticity of Tisio's work, there should be none about that by Guilio Romano of "St. Luke painting the Virgin," which was purchased in Italy for the first Earl Grosvenor, by Mr. Dalton, in 1763, for Waagen expressly states his belief as to its genuineness, after having examined a number of other undoubted works by this painter; but for long it was attributed to one of Raphael's pupils, and Mrs. Jameson, quoting Passavant as additional authority, also attributes this *genesis* to the panel.

There is, too, in this room, another picture by Guilio Romano, of "St. John the Baptist seated in the Wilderness," which was formerly in the Agar-Ellis collection, and is a copy of Raphael's well-known work in the Tribune at Florence. Andrea del Sarto is represented by three works; one, curiously modern in treatment, is a portrait of the Contessina Mattei, with a white ruff round her neck and a veil on her head; it was this portrait that Mrs. Jameson had in mind when she wrote: "We read a whole life in her settled, thoughtful brow, in her deep melancholy eye, and in the compressed resigned expression of the mouth." Another Del Sarto is a head of the infant St. John, on panel, which was one of Lord Grosvenor's original collection, and is not unlike the celebrated "Laughing Boy" by Da Vinci, once one of the gems of Fonthill; the third picture by the master forming a companion to this work, is a head of the Infant Saviour, and was probably bought together with the St. John.

Benvenuto Tisio is represented by a *Riposo*,¹ although this work was at one time attributed to Raphael. There seems to be always a certain amount of doubt as to the productions of this painter, whose pictures are rarely found outside Italy; but there should not be, because he gained his nickname of Garofolo from his custom of painting a gilly-flower in the corner of his pictures, which should be a certain kind of hall-mark, except, of course, in the case of obvious copies of his work.

By Tiarini, a comparatively little known artist, although Ludovico Caracci said of his picture of "St. Domenico raising a Dead Person to Life," that it was superior to most productions of the age, is a small delicately

¹ The frame of this picture is beautifully carved, and is said to be the work of the monks to whom it originally belonged. Note in the *Private Catalogue*.

painted picture on copper, representing "The Marriage of St. Catherine"; while by Albano is a "Virgin and Child," also on copper, probably painted from his own wife and child, whom he delighted to use as models for his pictures; and an "Annunciation," by Paul Veronese. Parmigiano is responsible for four works, two of which are small full-length figures on panel of St. Peter and St. Paul, originally inserted in the door of a room; and there is a small finished sketch on copper for the well-known "Vision of St. Jerome" in the National Gallery; while the fourth is "The Marriage of St. Catherine," also on copper, which was formerly in the Borghese Palace, whence it was brought to England by Mr. Ottley, and sold to Mr. Morland from whom Lord Grosvenor purchased it.

Biscaino, whose works are few and little known, for he died of the plague when only twenty-five, gives us a "Holy Family" in a landscape, although his *forte* was historical subjects; the picture here is one of the few that hang in a somewhat indifferent light, but that unquestionable authority thought great things of it is proved by Young's assertion that Sir Joshua Reynolds once offered no less than £2000 for it; and lastly, before we turn to other schools, there is a "St. Agnes," on copper, by Domenichino, which was one of the pictures purchased for Lord Grosvenor in Italy by Mr. Dalton.

Of the two Murillos which hang in this room, one represents "St. John and the Lamb," a subject the painter never seemed tired of reproducing; the other, a perfect little work, shows us the Infant Saviour asleep. The former was once in the collection of Mr. Andrew Wilson, whence it was purchased by Lord Grosvenor about 1810; while the latter was one of the Agar-Ellis pictures.

There are no less than four Nicholas Poussins in the Saloon, one being a finished study for one of the groups in the well-known picture of "Moses Striking the Rock" at Bridgewater House; this portion of the work being that in which the mother is shown, giving drink to one of her children, while the other looks up as if in anticipation of its share, and, behind, the father is clasping his hands in gratitude. The second is a "Holy Family with Angels," which was purchased at the sale of Lord Lansdowne's gallery, in 1806, a most rich and beautiful work, representing Tivoli, with the Temple of the Sybil, and originally came from Lord Waldegrave's collection in 1763, at which time Lord Ashburnham bought the companion picture by Gaspar Poussin. The third tells the story of Arcas and Calisto, and came from the Agar-Ellis collection; while the fourth, "Infants at Play," is such a lovely little work that one can quite believe the story that Beckford offered Agar-Ellis 1000 guineas for it; it has been engraved several times.

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There are also here three superlatively fine Claudes ; one a "Riposo," on copper ; another a landscape known, as I have before stated, with its companion which hangs in the Dining Room, as "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" ; and showing the ruins of Rome in the middle distance ; and the third another fine landscape.

The productions of the Dutch and Flemish masters that hang in the Saloon are of the highest merit. It is hopeless to say anything adequate about their beauty, but I must at least say a word. First, then, is the "River Scene," by Cuyp, in which we get a view of Dort in the evening, illumined by that warm and transparent colouring which is hardly surpassed by the two great pictures by the master at Dorchester House and Bridgewater House respectively. Then there is a wonderful Gerard Dou, of a mother nursing her child, painted with all the minuteness of Metsu, and at the same time, with a breadth of treatment which Metsu was hardly capable of attaining.

The example here of Paul Potter's art shows us a landscape with dairy farm and figures, seen in the light of a warm summer afternoon. This beautiful work was painted for the artist's patron, Heer van Slingelandt, of Dordrecht. When his collection was dispersed, in 1785, it was sold for £750 ; later, at the sale of the Tolozan collection, it fetched £1082 ; then Mr. Crawford of Rotterdam acquired it for £1350 ; but subsequently the Marquis of Westminster gave only £1000 for it. To-day it is probably worth six or seven times that amount. The landscape is said to represent the country between the Hague and Geestburg, and the château in the distance is that of Binkhorst, which is still standing.¹

Notwithstanding the beauty and interest of many of the pictures in the Saloon, I think the gem of this room must be allowed to be "The Salutation," by Rembrandt, which shows "St. Elizabeth receiving the Virgin." It was painted when the artist was thirty-four, and is dated 1640. Waagen considers it "so masterly in composition, in handling, lighting, and glow of chiaroscuro, as to be nearly on a par with 'The Woman taken in Adultery,' in the National Gallery" ; and this high praise has been confirmed by other critics ; while M. Michel, in his life of Rembrandt, gives a detailed description of the work, which, however, I do not repeat, as, except from a technical point of view, such descriptions are, it seems to me, not very satisfactory, and, in a book of this kind, would be merely tiresome. The picture, which, by-the-bye, like that of the work in the National Gallery to which it has been compared, has an oval top, formerly belonged to the King of

¹ Cundall in his *Life of Potter*.

Sardinia, and was brought to this country, in 1812, by M. Erard, from whom the second Earl Grosvenor purchased it.

There is also, in this room, an exceedingly fine Hobbema, which merits long and close attention ; it is a forest scene, and the figures introduced are by Lingelbach. This beautiful work was formerly in the possession of M. Fizian of Amsterdam, from whom Mr. Agar-Ellis purchased it ; it has been engraved by Mason.

I must make an end ; but before I do so, let me draw attention to "The Virgin and Child," by Adrian Van der Werff, which fascinating work was painted for the master's patron, the Elector Palatine, who gave it to Cardinal Ottoboni, from whose family it passed into the Agar-Ellis gallery ; and also to the consummate "Dismissal of Hagar," by Rubens, in which picture the expression and attitude of Sarah struck Mrs. Siddons so forcibly that she deemed them worthy of her admiration and study.¹

The Gallery, with the Rubens Room at the end, occupies the newer portion of Grosvenor House, which I spoke of earlier in this chapter. It is a truly magnificent apartment, with an extraordinarily fine and massive ceiling divided into square compartments, with heavily gilded cornices and a painted frieze representing the arts. The great doors are of mahogany picked out in gold, and there is a white marble mantelpiece of immense proportions and most beautiful design. In this apartment stand marble busts of the late Duke and Duchess of Westminster, and Lord Ronald Gower's statue of Marie Antoinette on her way to execution. Here is a table of lapis lazuli mounted in ormolu ; there a wonderful clock in tortoise-shell inlaid with mother-of-pearl and decorated with ormolu figures and porcelain columns ; in another part of the room is one of those Italian cabinets for which all the known semi-precious stones of the world seem to have been gathered together, and forming a miniature temple. Bronze figures of women uphold ormolu flowers to cast light upon the chamber, and columns of ebony, enriched with festoons and arabesques in ormolu, bear on their sides the ducal crest and coronet, and are surmounted by bronze figures of cupids supporting on their heads covered baskets of richly chased ormolu. Indeed nothing that wealth can suggest or taste and ingenuity create, seems wanting in this magnificent apartment.

Like all the principal rooms at Grosvenor House, the Gallery is filled with fine pictures ; and if there is some doubt attached to the authenticity of one or two of the canvases here, they are far outbalanced by the beauty and genuineness of the greater part of the pictures in this apart-

¹ See a note in the *Private Catalogue*.

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ment. The Raphael—a “Holy Family,” from the Agar-Ellis collection—is a copy, ’tis said the best extant, of the original which has been lost, and which had some affinity to the “Vierge au Linge” in the Louvre; the authenticity of Giovanni Bellini’s “Madonna and Child with four Saints,” has also been questioned, but it has an intrinsic interest, in that it once belonged to Fénélon, who also owned “The Circumcision,” by the same master, which hangs close by; and there is little doubt that the riding school picture, with the Infante Don Balthazar, is only partially the work of Velasquez, the better part being probably from the hand of his pupil Mazo; but the so-called portrait of Rubens and Elizabeth Brant is undoubtedly from the hand of that great master. It represents Pausias and Glycera, and was once supposed to indicate the artist and his wife in this classic guise. The flowers surrounding the figures are by Velvet Breughal, who so often collaborated with Rubens in this way.

Besides these there are nearly a score of pictures in the Gallery, and of some of the most important I must say a few words. In the first place there is a remarkable Rembrandt, representing a landscape with men drawing a net from the river, which figures are said to have been introduced by Teniers, to whom the picture once belonged. Indeed Waagen casts some doubt on Rembrandt having had a hand in the composition at all, rather attributing it to his school, of which it is certainly, if this assumption be correct, a very fine example. Lord Grosvenor bought the work from M. de la Hannte, in 1820.

Close to this hangs a picture about which no doubt is possible: Turner’s “Conway Castle,” which the late Duke of Westminster purchased for 2800 guineas, from the Wynn-Ellis collection in 1876, at the sale in which was sold the famous “Duchess of Devonshire,” by Gainsborough.

Another beautiful landscape is by Gaspar Poussin, one of the Agar-Ellis pictures; and still another, attributed to Titian, although it has also been assigned, by Waagen, to Gaspar Poussin or one of his school. The latter work was purchased in Italy, about the year 1783, by Gavin Hamilton, from whom Mr. Agar-Ellis acquired it. There are two other works by Titian in the Gallery; the first being “The Woman taken in Adultery,” which, according to Young, was brought from the Barberini Palace by a French officer, and afterwards came into the possession of M. de la Hannte, from whom Lord Grosvenor purchased it; the other, a *replica* of the famous canvas in the Dresden Gallery, representing “Christ and the Tribute Money.”

From the Calonne Gallery came the “Holy Family” by Paul Veronese; while the landscape by Philip de Koningh is a beautiful example of this master’s methods on an unusually large scale.

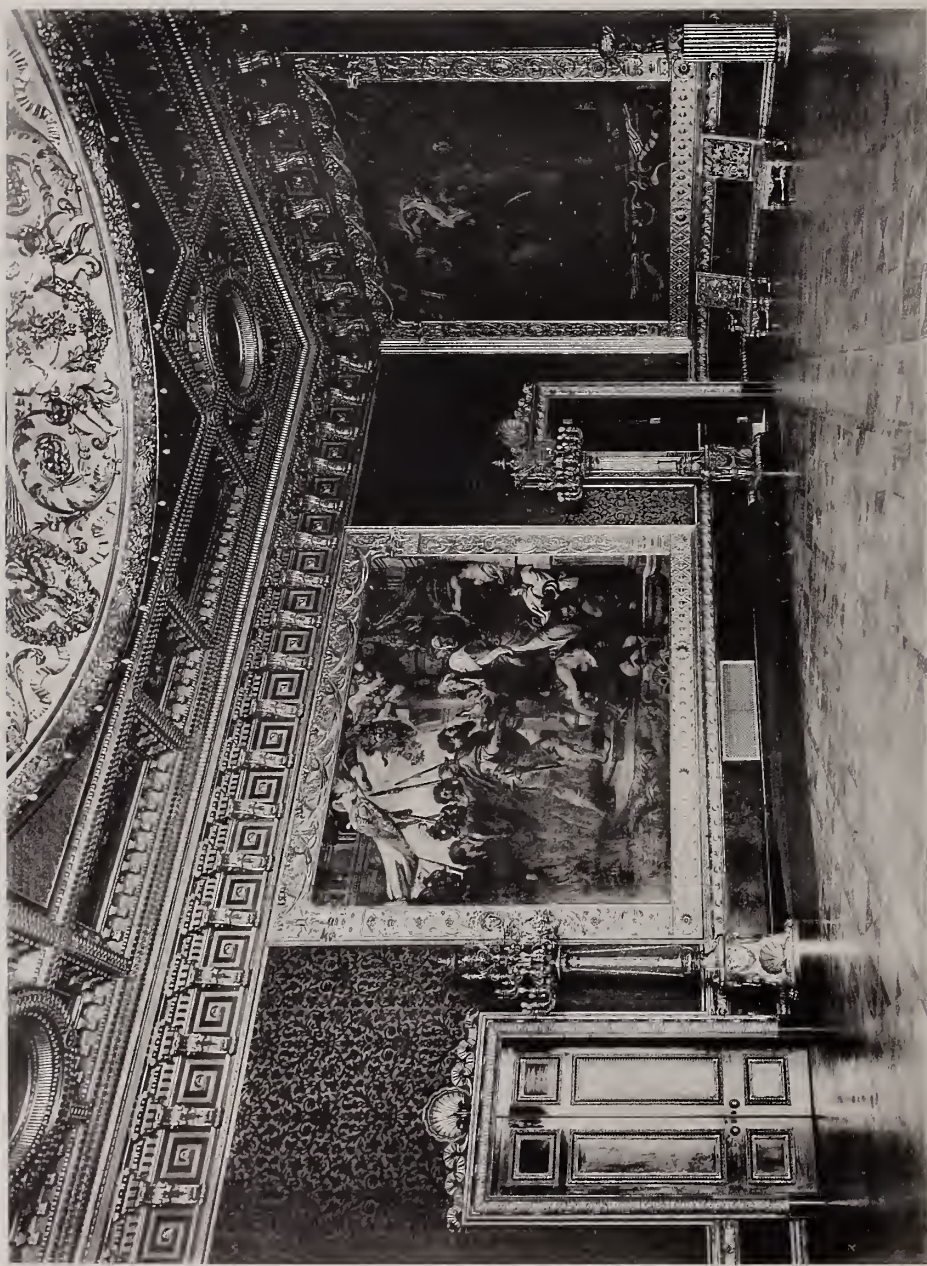


Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE RUBENS ROOM, GROSVENOR HOUSE.

From the Gallery we pass into the Rubens Room, which is decorated in the same style of lavish magnificence. Here hang, in frames let into the wall, the three colossal works, representing "The Israelites gathering Manna;" "The Meeting of Abraham and Melchisedek;" and "The Four Evangelists;" which once formed part of the series of nine paintings executed by Rubens, in 1629, for Philip IV. of Spain. The King presented them to his minister Olivarez, for the Carmelite convent at Loeches, which the latter had founded. In 1808, the French carried off seven of them; leaving two in the convent, and shortly after, the three now at Grosvenor House were sold to Mr. Bourke, the English Minister at Copenhagen, who, bringing them to this country in 1816, disposed of them to Lord Grosvenor for £10,000. According to Michel, the canvases were originally executed as patterns for tapestry, which accounts for their being in places somewhat rough and unfinished in appearance, and is some evidence in support of those, including Waagen and Michel, who considered that Rubens's pupils had much more to do with their production than the great painter himself. It is said that when they were carried off from the convent, the waggon bearing them broke down in a ditch, and that some of them rolled out into the water; one, "The Triumph of Christ," being seriously injured.

Remarkable as are many of the works hanging on the walls of the larger reception rooms at Grosvenor House, it is to the small Drawing Room, curiously enough, that we must look for the two world-famous pictures I have before mentioned—Gainsborough's "Blue Boy," and the "Mrs. Siddons" of Sir Joshua. Two such pictures as these would throw into the shade anything that might be hung in juxtaposition to them; and if a country may be proud in having produced two contemporary painters of such unquestioned greatness, a private owner may indeed congratulate himself on possessing the masterpieces of both.

Gainsborough is responsible for another canvas which formerly hung in this room, but is now in the Ante-Drawing Room, the subject being "A Stormy Sea," with a woman selling fish on the shore. Apart from the beauty of this work, it is interesting as being one of the only four subjects of this kind which the artist ever produced. Waagen awards it unstinted praise, asserting that "in clearness, warmth of tone, body, and keeping," it was the best picture of Gainsborough's he had seen—of course, he infers, in landscape.

Two other works which are particularly noticeable in this room are a "Virgin and Child with St. Catherine," by Vandyck, in which the head of St. Catherine is perfectly beautiful, exhibiting all the strength of

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Rubens with Vandyck's added grace; and the portrait of the painter and his wife by Teniers the younger. The former came from the Agar-Ellis collection, and both Waagen and Mrs. Jameson draw attention to the dignity and poetical sentiment of the work; while from its warmth of tone and transparency of colouring it is conjectured that the artist painted it after his return from Italy when the influence of the sunny south was fresh in his receptive mind. The latter work was executed in 1649, as is proved by the inscription on it; it represents the painter and his wife, Anne Breughal (daughter of Velvet Breughal, and an adopted daughter of Rubens), in conversation with their old gardener, close by the cottage of the latter, while Teniers's *château* is seen in the distance. The picture was originally in the collection of the Chevalier Verhulst, whence it passed, in 1779, into the hands of M. Le Brun, for the sum of £85. From M. Le Brun it was bought by Lord Lansdowne for £192; and subsequently Lord Grosvenor became its possessor at the greatly enhanced, but as it seems now, very small, price of £546.

In this room is also to be specially noted a picture of two angels, by Rubens, probably studies for a larger work; and a "Triumph of Venus," by Albano, most beautiful and almost Titian-like in warmth and depth of colouring.

Although a number of pictures hang in other parts of Grosvenor House, and particularly in the Corridor, where among others is a luminous and excellent view of the seashore on the Normandy coast, by that fine and too short-lived painter Bonington, these need no specific notice; but before we leave this palace of art, a word must be said about some of the paintings hanging in the Ante-Drawing Room. Here, for example, is a fine landscape by Gaspar Poussin, and a study of flowers by that scarce master, Mignon; while there is a landscape with cattle by Karel du Jardin; an interesting study of a "spotted horse" by Cuyp; and a characteristic landscape with itinerant musicians by Le Nain. By the side of these works, as if to accentuate the catholicity of taste observable throughout this wondrous collection, is what Mrs. Jameson calls, and rightly calls, "a divine little picture," by Fra Bartolomeo;¹ a landscape with the meeting of David and Abigail, by Domenichino; and a "Virgin and Child" by Pietro da Cortona; and just as one thinks one has seen all, the eye is attracted by the warmth of the landscape which Jan Both painted and in which the figures were put in by his brother Andrew.

¹ It will be remembered that Baccio della Porta, as he was properly named, became a Dominican in 1500, being deeply afflicted by the death of his friend Savonarola.

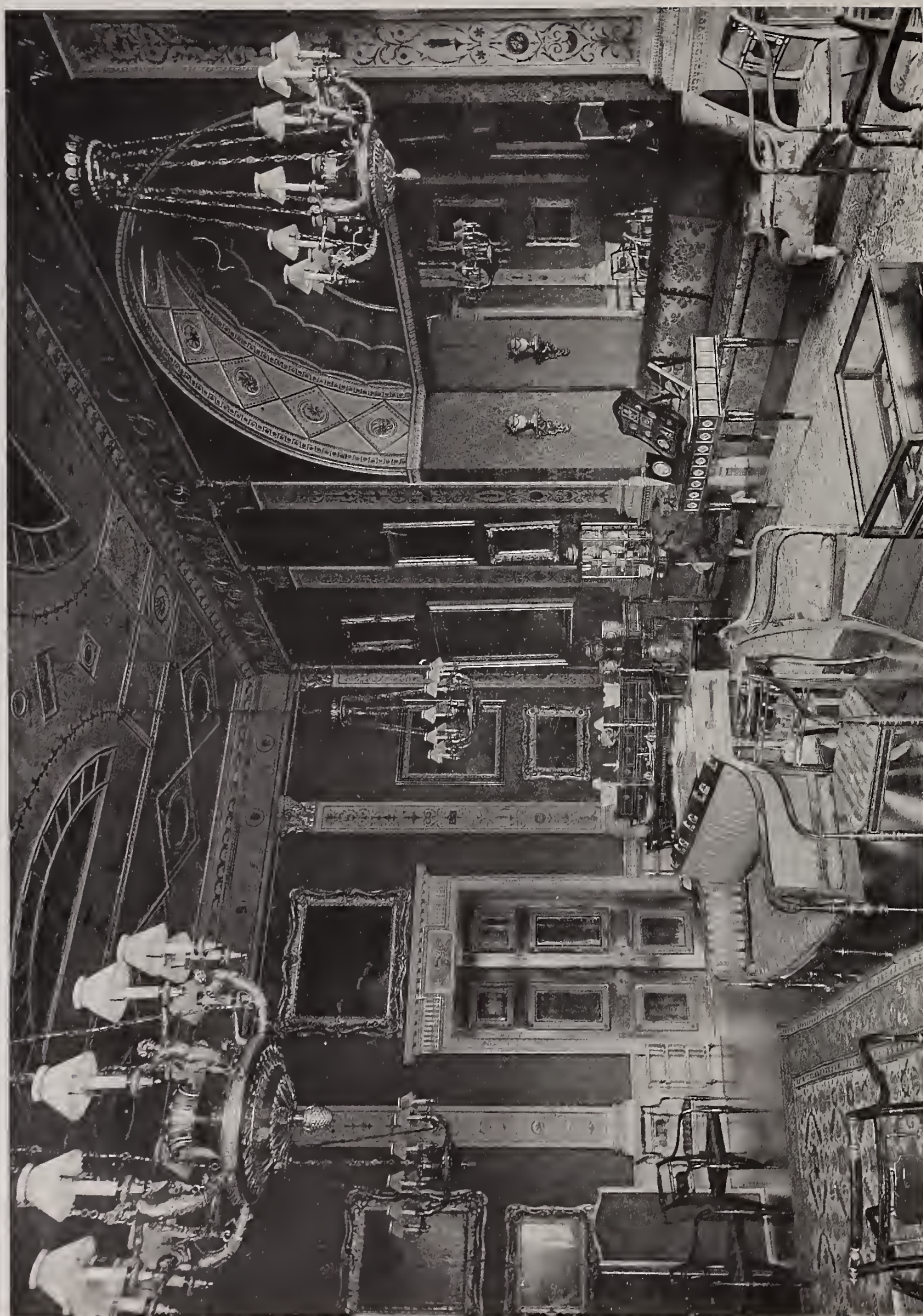


Photo J. Russell & Sons.

THE DRAWING ROOM, LANSDOWNE HOUSE.

CHAPTER XIII

LANSDOWNE HOUSE

WHEN Horace Walpole spoke of Lady Shelburne as being "Queen of the Palace," in Berkeley Square, he stated no more than the truth with regard to the lady, and the splendid mansion over which she presided; of which latter Waagen wrote, at a later date, that it united "the advantages of the most fashionable neighbourhood with a certain retirement." It is, indeed, probably the most secluded of all the great houses of London, and its somewhat unusual situation at right angles with the chief entrance gates has something to do with this, although, of course, its privacy is chiefly due to the fact of its standing well back in its own grounds, and also because those grounds abut on the relatively quiet square which bounds them to the north.

Lansdowne House is probably the most characteristic and elaborate example of Robert Adam's style of domestic architecture. Few persons, even if only slightly acquainted with his mannerisms, could attribute it to any other hand; and within it bears, if possible, still more emphatically the marks of his individuality; the Dining Room, in particular, being an example of what he could do carried to its highest power.

In the Soane Museum are preserved the original plans and drawings for the mansion, by which we can see that the original idea of the house was on an altogether different scale from that carried out; for the first plans showed a long and rather low mansion in a more severely classic style than that of the present house; but it is probable that the position which the building was obliged to take, rendered a higher and less extended frontage necessary, and the later drawings show Adam to have designed it as it substantially exists to-day. There is one important alteration, however, for in the original scheme there was designed to run at right angles to the main structure, on its north-west side, a great library in three divisions, which is now represented by the sculpture gallery, substituted under circumstances which will be explained later on. Indeed the housing of the books seems to have been the chief care of the builder, for besides this magnificent series of rooms,

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there was also another library on the ground floor, and still one more on the first floor, out of which the Ante-Room, with its circular end, was reached.¹

Lord Shelburne's bedroom was on the ground floor, where in fact the present study is, while his dressing-room was, curiously enough, on the first floor, and on the opposite side of the house.

The mansion was erected for Lord Bute about the middle of the eighteenth century, and, as happened when Clarendon built his splendid residence in Piccadilly a century earlier, the populace chose to see in this magnificent pile the results of speculation and political chicanery. Lord Bute was always an unpopular minister, perhaps the most unpopular of those who have presided over the destinies of this country, and whatever he did was immediately construed into something inimical to the good of the people, and whatever personal success he attained as the result of jobbery. Reasons were not wanting, as when are they if required to pull to shreds an already tottering reputation? On February 10, 1763, the Peace of Paris had been signed, and although by that treaty France, then our traditional enemy, ceded to Great Britain, Canada, Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton (about which the Duke of Newcastle was so notoriously ignorant according to the well-known anecdote), Mobile, and all the territory east of the Mississippi, Dominica, Tobago, St. Vincent, and Grenada, and received in return little, if we except St. Lucia, but those islands which perpetual earthquakes have made at best uncertain possessions, yet this country was not satisfied, simply, it may be conjectured, because the minister in power was the unpopular Lord Bute; and it was the fashion to attribute the money spent on building Lansdowne House, which was commenced soon afterwards, to the Prime Minister's so-called betrayal of his country. Lord Bute, however, never occupied the house, for, in 1765, he sold it, as it then stood, still unfinished, to the Earl of Shelburne, for less than it is supposed to have then already cost him; the price he received being £22,500. By a curious coincidence, its new owner was nearly as unpopular as its old, and when Lord Shelburne became responsible for the Peace of Versailles, in 1783, it was scandalously asserted that, whereas the mansion had been built by one peace, it was paid for by another. The accusation has in it a far too rhetorical ring to convey much confidence in its accuracy, and is somewhat on a par with Burke's indecent invective against Shelburne, when he attributed his not acting as a Cataline or a Borgia simply

¹ It is interesting to see that the powdering closets attached to Lord Shelburne's dressing-room and to that of Lady Shelburne, are much larger than the servants' rooms adjoining, which appear to be mere cupboards.

to his want of the necessary understanding; which, by-the-bye, reminds us so forcibly of a celebrated passage in one of Junius's¹ letters directed against the Duke of Grafton, as to give colour to the theory advanced by some, that those letters were the production of Burke himself.

Lord Shelburne appears to have been on the look-out for a site on which to build a residence for some time previous to his purchase of Lord Bute's unfinished home, and that he employed one of the Adam brothers to find a suitable spot is evidenced by a letter of Charles James Fox, dated June 29, 1761, and addressed to Lord Shelburne, in the course of which he says: "I see you have ordered Mr. Adam to look out for space to build an Hotel upon"; and he proceeds to mention, as a likely situation, the very site on which Lord Bute built the house which Lord Shelburne was eventually to purchase, describing it as "a fine piece of ground . . . still to be had, the garden of which, or the court before which, may extend all along the bottom of Devonshire garden, though no house must be built there; the house must be where some old paltry stables stand at the lower end of Bolton Row."

Both Lord Leicester and Lord Digby had also been in negotiation for the ground, but neither, for some reason, had settled on it, and Lord Shelburne's similar hesitancy resulted in its being snapped up by Lord Bute,² who, however, as we have seen, was never destined to inhabit the great house which he commenced to build on its site. Whether it was that he feared to intensify the extraordinary *animus* against him which he had already created in the minds of the people, by inhabiting so palatial a mansion; or whether it was that the expenses attendant on it threatened to make too great an inroad on his resources, I know not, but, at any rate, he sold the place to the Earl of Shelburne.

Apart from the expense of furnishing, Lord Shelburne must have laid out a considerable sum in completing the house and improving the gardens, which latter, were those of Devonshire House not contiguous, would be unique for so central a position in the West End.

In Lady Shelburne's Diary, several references are made to the new possession; but although she expresses herself pleased with it, and terms

¹ *A propos* it may not be generally known that Lord Shelburne was aware of the identity of Junius, and had promised to make known the secret, but death prevented his doing so, unhappily for the peace of the world, which is periodically disturbed by discussions on this tiresome subject. He once told Sir Richard Phillips that "he knew Junius, and knew all about the writing and production of those letters," and he further affirmed that "Junius has never yet been publicly named. None of the parties ever guessed at as Junius was the true Junius." But let us remember Lord Beaconsfield's famous advice on this subject—and say no more about it.

² In 1764 he was living in Albemarle Street, and later, till his death in 1792, at 73 South Audley Street. It will be remembered that he was Prime Minister from May 1762 to April 1763.

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it "very noble," at the same time, reading between the lines, we can see that her ladyship would naturally enough have been better content to have entered into possession of a completed house.

Politically Lord Shelburne, who was First Lord of the Treasury from July 1782 to February 1783, was unpopular; and the Peace for which he was responsible in the latter year was a source of much heart-burning among the people, who, ready enough to mix private and public actions, regarded it as little less than a money-making manœuvre. But Lord Shelburne was not a man of this sort; and even Jeremy Bentham has recorded that "his manner was very imposing, very dignified," while Wraxall adds that "in his person, manners, and address, the Earl wanted no external quality to captivate or conciliate mankind." This quotation from Wraxall draws my attention to a longer account which he has left of Lord Shelburne, and which I quote *in extenso* because it gives some indication as well of the *habitués* of the great house about which I am writing: "No individual in the Upper House attracted so much national attention from his accomplishments, talents, and extensive information on all subjects of foreign or domestic policy, as the Earl of Shelburne. In the prime of life and in the full vigour of his faculties, he displayed whenever he rose to speak, an intimate knowledge of Europe, together with such a variety of matter, as proved him eminently qualified to fill the highest situation . . . nor was that nobleman less versed in all the principles of finance and revenue, than in the other objects of political study that form a statesman. His house, or more properly to speak, his palace in Berkeley Square, which had formerly constituted the residence of the Earl of Bute, formed at once the centre of a considerable party, as well as the asylum of taste and science. It is a fact, that during the latter years of Lord North's administration, he retained three or four clerks in constant pay and employment under his own roof, who were solely occupied in copying State papers or accounts. Every measure of finance adopted by the First Minister passed, if I may so express myself, through the alembic of Shelburne House, where it was examined and severely discussed. There, while Dunning and Barré met to settle their plan of action . . . omniscient Jackson furnished every species of legal or general knowledge. Dr. Price and Mr. Baring produced financial plans, or made arithmetical calculations, meant to controvert and overturn, or to expose those of the First Lord of the Treasury: while Dr. Priestly, who lived under the Earl of Shelburne's personal protection, prosecuted in the midst of London, his philosophical and chemical researches."

Notwithstanding his many fine qualities, his splendid hospitality, and his remarkable endowments of mind, or perhaps on this very account,

Lord Shelburne was accused by his opponents of duplicity and insincerity. George III. is known to have termed him "the Jesuit of Berkeley Square"; and Junius called him 'Malagrida,' in allusion to the Portuguese Jesuit of that name; *à propos* of which it is said that Goldsmith once naïvely remarked to Lord Shelburne himself, that he could not understand why he should be so called, "for 'Malagrida' was a very good sort of man."

Reynolds has left a portrait of Lord Shelburne, which indicates anything but duplicity or insincerity; and yet political hatred was even able to twist his Lordship's features into an indication of falsehood;¹ and Hayward tells the following story of Gainsborough who also once attempted to transfer these lineaments to canvas. Lord Shelburne complained that the portrait was not like him, and the painter was forced to agree, and asked that he might be allowed to try again. Failing in this second attempt, he is said to have thrown down his brushes, exclaiming, "D—n it, I never could see through varnish, and there's an end."

A modern historian says of Lord Shelburne that "most of his political ideas were in advance of his time," and this is, perhaps, sufficient to account for the odium he had to endure and the antagonism he constantly encountered. The populace is too willing to judge eminent men from its own more restricted standards, and to see dishonest motives where none exist, especially when it becomes the ignorant tool of interested political wire-pullers. But matters of such import are not properly within my ken here; and it is more interesting to know that Lord Shelburne extended the hospitality of Lansdowne House to Dr. Priestly, on which fact, Brougham once asserted its chief claim to fame would be based; and that he filled his house with fine pictures and furniture, with a magnificent collection of books and manuscripts, and above all, with that unrivalled assemblage of statuary which is still to be found there.

In the January of 1771, the first Lady Shelburne (*née* Lady Sophia Carteret, daughter of John, Earl Granville) died, and the bereaved husband set out for Italy soon after. Here his attention was turned to the relics of ancient art, which in those days were to be had almost for the asking, and with the help of Gavin Hamilton, the Scotch painter and antiquary, who remained in Italy after Lord Shelburne had returned home, he gradually acquired some of the most notable pieces. Hamilton, whom Goethe eulogises, was a man full of knowledge and resource, and above all, enthusiasm, and on behalf of his patron he superintended those excavations in the neighbourhood of Rome which yielded such a rich harvest; and for some time he was occupied in forwarding to London

¹ Wraxall.

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the results of his labours in this direction. The many letters¹ he wrote to Lord Shelburne sufficiently show the loving care he expended over the collection of these treasures. Nor was he less solicitous about their housing, and he prepared the outlines of a scheme for their reception, of which the present magnificent Sculpture Gallery, formed by the enlargement of Adam's original Library, was the key-note.

The fine Library, consisting of priceless manuscripts and printed books, the beautiful furniture, and valuable pictures were not long destined to grace the palace to which they once gave an added splendour. Lord Shelburne, who had been created Marquis of Lansdowne in 1784, died in 1805, and was succeeded in the titles by his son, John Henry, the "tall personable man, rather regardless of his dress," who soon after gave directions for the dispersal of these literary and artistic treasures. Luckily for this country, the British Museum purchased the famous Lansdowne manuscripts; but the books and pictures were scattered far and wide.

These manuscripts, for which Lord Sandwich, the celebrated "Jemmy Twitcher," once offered in exchange, a "wild beast" for the menagerie which was at that time kept at Wycombe, were only saved by the merest chance from destruction, for a bargain had been struck with a cheese-monger who was to have had the whole for £10. When it is remembered that the documents include the collections of Bishop Kennet, and Le Neve, the heraldic writer, and comprise many of the State papers of the Cecils, as well as those of Sir Julius Cæsar, and a variety of other papers where, as has been said, "the past history of England might be read from the time of Henry VI. to the time of the Star Chamber, and from the time of the Star Chamber to the reign of George III.," it will be realised what invaluable records were preserved by their subsequent purchase by the British Museum, with, by-the-bye, the first sum of money ever voted by Parliament for such a purpose.²

The first sale of pictures was conducted by Messrs. Cox, Burrell and Foster, on the premises, on March 19 and 20, 1806, and fifty-six pictures were disposed of; on which occasion, *inter alia*, Rubens's "Adoration of the Magi" realised 800 guineas; Claude's "St. Paul carried into Bondage," 510 guineas; and "A Riposo" by Nicholas Poussin, 530 guineas. Four years later Mr. Christie sold another portion which had been removed to his rooms, on May 25 and 26, when two works by Salvator Rosa, "Diogenes casting away his Golden Cup," and "Heraclitus in Contemplation," fetched 980 and 950 guineas respectively.³

¹ These have been privately printed together with a catalogue of the ancient marbles.

² See Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, vol. i. p. 311.

³ See Redford's *Art Sales*, and *Annals of Christie's*.



Photo J. Russell & Sons.

THE SCULPTURE GALLERY, LANSDOWNE HOUSE.

Although he thus dispersed some of the art treasures he had inherited, the second Lord Lansdowne displayed a certain amount of wisdom in retaining the collection of sculpture which is to-day, apart from its intrinsic value, eloquent of the taste of its collector and the knowledge and industry of his henchman Hamilton. This remarkable assemblage, unrivalled in any private gallery in the kingdom, was secured by the Marquis for something between £6600 and £7000, incredible as it seems nowadays when more than one of the statues alone would readily fetch such a sum. Dr. Waagen, when in this country, visited Lansdowne House, and was particularly impressed by the Sculpture Gallery and its wonderful contents. "The appearance of the Grand Salon," he writes in his *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, "is particularly striking, it being most richly and tastefully adorned with antique sculptures, some of which are very valuable for size and workmanship. The two ends of the apartment are formed by two large apse-like recesses, which are loftier than the centre of the apartment. In these large spaces antique marble statues, some of them larger than life, are placed at proper distances, with a crimson drapery behind them, from which they are most brilliantly relieved in the evening by a very bright gas light. This light, too, was so disposed that neither the glare nor the heat was troublesome. The antique sculptures of smaller size are suitably disposed on the chimney-piece and along the walls." I quote this because, with the exception of the lighting, which has been brought up to modern requirements by the installation of electricity, the Sculpture Gallery presents substantially the same appearance to-day as it did fifty years ago when Waagen saw it.

Here stand, as they then stood, the Diomed or Discobolus, which still remains one of the most remarkable examples of the restorations of the time of Cavaceppi; the seated Juno, of which many parts, however, notably the arms, feet, and right leg, are of a later date than the torso; the Jason fastening his sandal, of which other examples are in the Louvre and at Munich; the statue of Mercury, seven feet high, one of the finest of those that exist, which was discovered at Torre Colombaro, on the Appian Way; the young Marcus Aurelius, and the great bust of Minerva; the head of Mercury, and the statue of the youthful Hercules, found near Adrian's Villa at Tivoli, and considered one of the most important relics of ancient art that have defied time's devouring hand. Few things are more tiresome than an extended list of works of art; and I mention these few treasures, not a tithe of those preserved here, rather as an indication of the beauty and value of the statuary, than as adequately representative of this noble collection.

The bulk of the sculpture is, of course, in the gallery which was

specially designed to receive it, but various pieces are now to be found in other parts of the mansion ; such as the Esculapius, a fine relief over the chimney-piece of the Entrance Hall, which Waagen, curiously enough, does not mention ; and the sleeping figure, the last work of Canova, having some affinity to the celebrated Hermaphroditus in the Louvre, which is to-day placed in the Dining Room. This apartment is probably Adam's masterpiece of internal decoration ; and although purists may find it over elaborate, and echo Walpole's *dictum* about the "harlequinades of Adam," yet it cannot be denied that, in its particular style, it is as complete an example as seems humanly possible.

If the formation of the collection of sculpture at Lansdowne House is due to the first Marquis, and its preservation to the second ; the third, and in some respects the most notable of these holders of the title, is responsible for the fine gallery of pictures which to-day hang on the walls of the mansion.

Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice was the half-brother of the second Marquis, being the son of the first by his marriage, *en second nocés*, with Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick, daughter of John, Earl of Upper-Ossory. As a political figure he bulks largely in the history of the reigns of William IV. and Victoria. Three times was he Lord President of the Council, and from 1827 to 1828, he was Secretary of State for the Home Department ; while from 1855 to 1858, he was a Cabinet Minister without office, an indication that his party was anxious to profit by his advice and experience, even when advancing years precluded him from taking an active part in any particular department. He was indeed, the Nestor of the Liberal party, and the Princess Lieven, writing in 1827, speaks of his being "the most distinguished of the great aristocrats of this country, without a spot on his great reputation." But if his political fame is thus firmly based on his integrity and other sterling qualities, his reputation as an art patron and a friend of literature is still better known, and perhaps more often recorded ; and it is safe to say that hardly an aspirant to artistic or literary fame who was brought to his notice, or whom he personally discovered, failed to benefit by his generous advice and princely protection. When he succeeded to the title only a relatively few family portraits were left to represent the fine gallery which the first Marquis had collected, and he at once set to work to fill the gap which had been created by the sale of these treasures. In the first place he purchased from the widow of his half-brother the famous marbles which had been left her ; and his care then extended to the formation of a fresh collection of pictures. In this he not only showed the catholicity of his taste but also the soundness of his judgment. Some collectors limit their acquisitions

either wholly to the "old masters," as they are called, or to the works of living painters. Lord Lansdowne combined the two, and thus if he commissioned Leslie to depict one of those delightful scenes from the life of Sir Roger de Coverley, he at the same time was ready to purchase Rembrandt's portrait of himself; and so we find Calcott next to Caracci, and Frank Stone by the side of Sebastian del Piombo.¹

Although there is no specific Picture Gallery at Lansdowne House, the fact that the Reception Rooms lead one into another and are all more or less filled with works of art, gives the appearance of one, without the monotony of over large wall spaces; and in the Drawing Room, the Library, the Sitting Room, the Ante-Room, we still find some of the great painters of the world represented.

The superb portrait of Count Federigo da Bizzola, by Sebastian del Piombo, purchased from the Ghizzi family at Naples, hangs in the Drawing Room; as does Lodovico Caracci's "Christ on the Mount of Olives," originally in the Guistiniani collection, as well as a "Holy Family" by the same painter. Antonio Caracci, that rare master, is represented by a "Virgin and Child," of great beauty and warmth of tone; while Carlo Dolce is responsible for another rendering of the same subject.

There are four or five Velasquezs; one a portrait of himself, another that of the Conde d'Olivarez, the great Minister of Philip IV., both of which pictures were formerly in the possession of Godoy, "Prince of Peace," as he was called; while two landscapes from the same brush which hang here were formerly in the Royal Palace at Madrid and were brought from Spain, by Mr. Bourke, the Danish Minister, at the time of the French occupation. Another interesting work by the same hand represents a noble Spanish child lying in his cradle; and was one of those belonging to the first Marquis of Lansdowne.

Two other works in this room had their *provenance* from the Borghese collection; "The Prodigal Son," by Guercino, originally in the Colonna Gallery at Rome, and Domenichino's picture of St. Cecilia, which was purchased by Lucien Bonaparte, who sold it to the Queen of Etruria; after which it came into this country with the Lucca collection, in 1840.²

Murillo is represented by an "Immaculate Conception," a subject he is believed to have painted no less than twenty times, of unusually full colouring. There also formerly hung here a female portrait, by Rembrandt, signed, and dated 1642, which came from Lord Wharnccliffe's gallery,

¹ On one occasion Lord Lansdowne *did* refuse to become a purchaser; it was when Marshal Soult offered him his collection of Murillos—his spoils during the Peninsular Campaign—for which he asked the sum of £100,000, as Creevy records.

² Mrs. Jameson.

but this, together with his portrait of himself, from the Danoot collection at Brussels, which was purchased by Lord Lansdowne from M. Nieuwenhuys for £800, are here no longer ; while the marvellous canvas, known as "Rembrandt's Mill," is now at Bowood. Waagen, when he saw the two former pictures, was enthusiastic about their merits, even going so far, with regard to the latter, as to state that "among the portraits which Rembrandt has bequeathed of himself in his later years, this ranks foremost for animated conception, broad and yet careful treatment."

Two portraits by Reynolds hang in the Drawing Room ; of these, "The Girl with a Muff," a replica of a former work, was purchased by Lord Lansdowne at the Thomond sale (it will be remembered that Reynolds' favourite niece, Mary Palmer, to whom he bequeathed the bulk of his property, married the Marquis of Thomond), in 1821, for 265 guineas. The other work represents Elizabeth Drax, who became the wife of the fourth Earl of Berkeley, in 1744, and whom I find among Sir Joshua's sitters for October 1759.

Another example of Reynolds deserves a word ; notably the portrait of Lady Ilchester, first wife of the second Earl, and her two daughters, which was painted during the spring of 1779. One of the children—Lady Louisa Fox-Strangways—was their fourth daughter, and became the wife of the third Marquis of Lansdowne, in 1808. This beautiful picture hangs in the Sitting Room, in company with Tintoretto's portrait of Andrew Doria, and Ostade's "Winter Scene in Holland," which Waagen calls "a *chef d'œuvre* in every respect."

In the Ante-Room there is a particularly interesting work by Eckhardt, representing Sir Robert Walpole and his first wife, Catherine Shorter, with Houghton Hall in the background. The dogs in the picture were painted by Wotton, while the portraits of Sir Robert and Lady Walpole were copied by Eckhardt from miniatures by Zincke. Additional interest is given to this work by the fact that it is enclosed in a frame carved by Grinling Gibbons, in which, among a profusion of fruit, flowers, cupids and birds, the arms of the Walpole family are introduced. The picture originally belonged to Horace Walpole, who fully describes it in his account of Strawberry Hill, where it hung over the chimney-piece in the Blue Bed Chamber. Near it now hangs Gonzales Coques's portrait of "An Architect and his Wife" ; while two other portraits deserve attention : one of Francis Horner, the politician and political economist, by Raeburn, and Lawrence's well-known picture of the third Marquis of Lansdowne.

One of Vandyck's innumerable presentments of Henrietta Maria

is in the Library, where may also be seen no less than four Reynolds portraits—those of Kitty Fisher, Garrick, Horace Walpole, and Sterne.

That of Garrick is the famous one, so often reproduced, showing the great actor looking straight at the spectator, with his hands clasped and the thumbs placed together. It was painted in 1776, and is a remarkable example of that “momentary” quality which Northcote considered so distinguishing a characteristic of Reynolds’ methods.¹ The Sterne is equally well known, and the wig slightly awry which is so noticeable a feature in the portrait has been accounted for by the fact that “while he was sitting, his wig had continued to get itself a little on one side; and the painter, with that readiness in taking advantage of accident to which we owe so many of the delightful novelties in his works, painted it so.”²

The portrait of Kitty Fisher, with a parrot on her hand, was probably the one executed in 1759; “that small open mouth would have been too trifling for any other action than that of speaking to a parrot,” is Lady Eastlake’s comment; while the presentment of Walpole is a *replica* of that painted, I believe, in 1756, and engraved by Merdell. The original picture was formerly in the Marquis of Hertford’s collection; the one here was executed for Mr. Grosvenor Bedford, from whose family it was purchased.

Besides these, we find hanging on the walls of the Library, Pope by Jervas, and Flaxman by Jackson, General Middleton by Gainsborough, which, by-the-bye, was long thought to be a likeness of Benjamin Franklin; and a portrait of an Italian architect, once erroneously supposed to represent Sansovino, who designed the Palazzo Cornaro at Venice, by Giorgione.

In noting these various works I have, of course, only mentioned a few of the pictures in Lansdowne House; but I have endeavoured to draw attention to those which seemed, for a variety of reasons, best worth notice. A complete catalogue³ would have embraced the names of the chief exponents of the Italian, Dutch, and early English schools, as well as those of the contemporaries of the third Marquis, to whom he was so munificent a patron, such as Leslie and Calcott, Collins and Wilkie. Of the first named we have “Sir Roger de Coverley going to

¹ See Leslie and Taylor’s *Life of Reynolds*.

² Ibid. Sterne sat in 1760. The picture was painted for Lord Ossory, and came into the possession of Lord Holland. It was purchased by Lord Lansdowne for 500 guineas.

³ The *Private Catalogue* of the pictures here and at Bowood has kindly been lent me by the Marquis of Lansdowne. In it are recorded over 350 pictures; some of first-rate importance, and all having some points of artistic or intrinsic interest.

Church," a subject he had treated before for James Dunlop, and which he repeated at the request of his patron; Calcott gives us a portrait of Lady Calcott, and a work entitled, "Shepherd Boys." Collins painted three pictures for Lord Lansdowne—his "Birdcatchers," in 1814; "The Saviour in the Temple," in 1840; and two years later the "Family about to leave their Native Shore"; while Wilkie's "Sick Lady," executed in 1809, was purchased for £150, by the Marquis, who also became the possessor of a later work; "Monks at Confession." The same painter executed, too, a portrait of Lady Lansdowne, *à propos* of which Haydon writes, in his *Diary*, for September 20, 1808: "Wilkie breakfasted with me, on his return from Lord Lansdowne's, a portrait of whose lady he has brought home which is truly exquisite; I had no idea of his being capable of so much: it gives me real pleasure."¹

Just as to-day Lansdowne House is famous as a political and social centre, so in the time of the third Marquis was it the meeting-place for the great and the brilliant. Abraham Hayward, who was one of its notable *habitués*, has left descriptions of the *réunions* here, and has affirmed how "the guests . . . were so selected that the host took care that all should share in the conversation, and when they were reassembled in the Drawing Room, he would adroitly coax them into groups, or devote himself for a minute or two carelessly and without effort to the most retiring or least known."

The political history of this period contains the numberless names of those who gathered here to benefit by Lord Lansdowne's experience or to seek his valued advice. It would be tiresome, if easily practicable, to give them here; but at least some of the literary notabilities who were honoured guests may be mentioned. Tom Moore was, of course, a constant visitor both here and at Bowood; and his gentle spirit will hardly complain if I term him the "tame cat" of Lansdowne House. His *Diary* is full of references to dinners and dances at the 'palace' in Berkeley Square, and we know that he did not disdain the pleasure produced by reading in the next morning's paper that "the Marquis of Lansdowne entertained Mr. Thomas Moore and a number of other literary and scientific gentlemen at dinner at Lansdowne House"! or on another occasion in being the only plain "mister" among the guests that included royalty downwards!²

Here, too, were to be met Allen, of Holland House fame; Sydney Smith, who kept the table in a roar, and his hardly less amusing brother "Bobus"—"short, apt, and pregnant," as Moore terms him; Luttrell

¹ Some of these relatively modern works have now been removed to Bowood.

² See references in his *Diary*, *passim*.

and Fonblanque; Macaulay, of whose "range of knowledge anything may be believed"; Rogers, with his sepulchral face and bitter tongue; Hallam, who, as Rogers once said, fought (in argument) with Macaulay over him, "as if I was a dead body"; Dickens in the reflected fame of his earlier works, and Head with the lesser glory of his more ephemeral "Bubbles"; Schlegel agonising Rogers with his loud voice and "unnecessary use of it," and startling others by his egotism; and Madame de Staël, a fitting female counterpart, taking her "premeditated stand," in the saloon, in order to attract attention.

Montalembert has enunciated his *mots* in those rooms where Thiers has fallen asleep under the influence of Macaulay's swelling periods; Payne Knight has given voice to a hazardous joke about Canova's recumbent marble; and Ticknor has met there, Lady Holland, "very gracious—or intending to be so."

The list might be almost inexhaustibly continued; but I think sufficient has been said to indicate what a number of remarkable men these rooms have seen; what a wealth of great and witty sayings these walls have heard; and what a broad mind must have been his who loved to gather together such diverse elements beneath his hospitable roof.

Politics, painting, literature, and science we have seen to have occupied the catholic mind of the third Marquis; music also held a place there, and Dr. Waagen records how "the concerts given by the Marquis in the splendid saloon offer a rare combination of attraction; for, while the ear is beguiled with tones of the most enchanting music, the eye rests with increased pleasure alternately on the admirably lighted sculpture, and on the numerous specimens of English female beauty."

Such, indeed, was the effect of this "concord of sweet sounds," that the critic devotes four pages to a discussion on German music, led to it by the esteem in which the masterpieces of this school were held at Lansdowne House. This reminds me that the first owner of Lansdowne House—Lord Bute—was also alive to the influence of music, and Jekyll told Moore, on one occasion, that there was once a project for placing an orchestra in an underground chamber from which pipes would conduct the tuneful sounds into any other room that might be desired. The third Lord Lansdowne, however, corrected this so far as the orchestra was concerned, stating that it was an organ that was to produce the music, but that the pipes were actually discovered, on some alterations being made to the mansion.

The diaries and memoirs of the period during which Lansdowne House was a centre of social and political activity, are full of references

to functions of various kinds, and the interesting people in all ranks of life who have at one time or another met under this hospitable roof. One or two examples may not be found uninteresting. Thus Ticknor, who saw so much during his sojourn in this country, and devoured with activity its great houses and its ever-surprising sights, notes, on March 28, 1838, being engaged to a party here, "where we found a very select party, made in honour of the Duchess of Gloucester, daughter of George III. . . . All the ministry were there . . . the Duke of Cambridge, the foreign ministers, Lord Jeffrey—just come to town—Lord and Lady Holland, the last of whom is rarely seen anywhere except at home. . . . Lady Holland was very gracious, or intended to be so; and Lord Holland was truly kind and agreeable."

On April 2, Ticknor was again here, and has left, in his *Diary*, a particularly interesting vignette of the occasion: "We had," he writes, "to wait dinner a little for Lord Lansdowne, who, as President of the Council, had been detained in the House of Lords, fighting with Brougham, whom he pronounced to be more able and formidable than at any previous period of his life. Lord Lansdowne seemed in excellent spirits. Not so Lady Lansdowne. As she went into dinner, surrounded by the most beautiful monuments of the arts, and sat down with Canova's Venus behind her, she complained to me, naturally and sincerely, of the weariness of a London life. . . . But the table was brilliant. Senior is always agreeable, but, by the side of Sydney Smith and Jeffrey, of course he put in no claim; and I must needs say, that when I saw Smith's free good-humour, and the delight with which everybody listened to him, I thought there were but small traces of the aristocratic oppression of which he had so complained in the morning. Lord Jeffrey, too, seemed to be full of good things and good sayings. . . . Fine talk it certainly was, often brilliant, always enjoyable. The subjects were Parliament and Brougham; the theatre and Macready; reviewing, *à propos* of which the old reviewers hit one another hard; the literature of the day, which was spoken of lightly; Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella*, which Lord Lansdowne said he had bought from its reputation, and which Milman in his quiet way praised." And again in another entry, Ticknor speaks of the large parties in Berkeley Square, and of the host who seemed "more amiable and agreeable than ever," and who "enjoys a green old age, surrounded with the respect of all, even of those most opposed to him in politics."

But it is, of course, Moore who gives us the most frequent peeps into the *vie intime* of Lansdowne House, and the references in his *Diary* are both interesting and valuable because they tell us the names of

many of the most illustrious guests who were wont to assemble here. Thus we read, on May 23, 1829: "Dined at Lansdowne House—company, Baring and Lady Harriet, the Carlises, the Lord Chancellor and Lady Lyndhurst, Lord Dudley, &c. Sat next to the Chancellor, and found him very agreeable." Again, on June 27, 1830: "With Lord Lansdowne again to meet a large party, Lord Grey, Brougham, the Carlises, the Hollands, &c. &c. The dinner afterwards made some noise in the newspapers, being represented foolishly as a reconciliation dinner to Lord Grey." *A propos* of this feast, Moore notes the next day that "though the dinner was not quite of so *prononcé* a character as the papers would have it, there is no doubt it made a part of a mutual movement towards a renewal of old friendship that has taken place between the parties." On another occasion Moore meets Lord Dudley, noted for his eccentricities, among a crowd of notable guests here; as the poet sat next to him, he was able more particularly to note "his mutterings to himself; his fastidious contemplation of what he had on his plate, occasionally pushing about the meat with his fingers, and uttering low-breathed criticisms upon it," which denotes, as Moore remarks, that "all is on the verge of insanity." At another time, the poet dines here in company with Macaulay and Schlegel and Rogers, and notes that the latter suffered "manifest agony from the German's loud voice"; and is pleased that Macaulay's universal knowledge and astounding memory was able to confirm his assertion that Voltaire's, "*superflu, chose si nécessaire*," was suggested by a passage in Pascal's *Lettres Provinciales*; and so on and so on!

Indeed from Moore and Creevey to Greville and Ticknor, there is hardly a journal which can be ransacked without some interesting reference to this great house and its hospitable owners being found. Those "cool, grand apartments," as Lady Eastlake called them, have been the scene of so many notable gatherings that one despairs of doing justice to a theme which lends itself to so many ramifications. The brilliant lady whose words I have just quoted, has left an account of a great concert here, when hardly less than 2000 guests, among whom were several members of the Royal Family, enjoyed that combination of the arts for which Lansdowne House has always been celebrated, and which was the dominant note in the character of the third Marquis.

Politics have been as indissolubly connected with Lansdowne House as have music and painting; and here was held the first Cabinet Council of Lord Grey's Administration; at which meeting it was resolved that Brougham should be asked to fill the office of Lord Chancellor. How many hardly less important meetings have not been assembled here, or what matters

of State import have not been discussed within its walls, from the time when the acknowledged head of the Whig party was here to be found surrounded by the treasures which his large-minded enthusiasm had brought together, prodigal of his experience and talents in the service of his country; to our own day when his descendant, the present Marquis of Lansdowne, fills, and has filled, posts as onerous and distinguished as did the third Marquis, and has in them all displayed that courtesy, that discretion, and those splendid abilities which appear to be the dominant characteristics of his line!



Photo H. N. King.

THE GRAND STAIRCASE, LONDONDERRY HOUSE.

CHAPTER XIV

LONDONDERRY HOUSE

PARK LANE has long been a synonym for wealth and influence. The magnificent houses that succeed one another from Piccadilly to Oxford Street, the beauty of their outlook on to the Park, and the value of their artistic treasures, all combine to give it this distinctive characteristic; and it is a long cry from its present fashionable fame to the days when, as Tyburn Lane, it led to that fatal tree which was the last stage in the life of many a malefactor.

This thoroughfare, as the world knows, is full of splendid, and in some cases historically interesting residences; of these, besides Londonderry House, I deal in this volume with two, Grosvenor House and Dorchester House, but there are others which, although not lending themselves to detailed treatment, require a word or two; and this seems the most convenient and appropriate place in which to say it.

Of recent years Park Lane has had its share of rebuilding as much as any other part of the West End; but instead of rows of houses or blocks of flats, here have risen several palatial residences which have thrown somewhat into the shade the smaller houses adjacent to them. Of these, three are particularly noticeable, and curiously enough they all cluster together, viz. No. 25, now the residence of Sir Edward Sassoon; No. 26, till recently the property of the late Mr. Alfred Beit, and Stanhope House, belonging to Mr. R. W. Hudson.

The first was built by the late Mr. Barney Barnato, who, in the heyday of his prosperity, commenced the erection of it on a piece of ground whose formation necessitated a somewhat shallow building with an unusually long frontage to Park Lane. In the original scheme of design statues at various points were introduced, to add, I suppose, decorative effect to the building—a result they hardly attained; before, however, the place was completed Mr. Barnato died on his way from South Africa, and some time afterwards Sir Edward Sassoon bought the unfinished mansion, and completed it; and wisely, as it seems, caused the statues and other decorative excrescences to be removed, thus giving dignity to a building that once threatened to want it. The mansion

stands at the corner of Stanhope Street, and is thus within a stone's throw of Chesterfield House ; so that a comparison is easy between the architectural qualifications of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries as applied to great mansions. There will be, I think, little doubt as to which excels in beauty and dignity.

Stanhope House is another of the great mansions in this quarter which have been the outcome of commercial success ; it is thoroughly mediæval in treatment, and is not only an interesting, but most successful experiment in this style, and is obviously beautifully built ; of course, in such a *milieu* it may seem rather out of place, but this is an almost inevitable result in a city like London, where architecture has borrowed a hundred styles and mixed them all ; and in this, too, Stanhope House is kept in countenance by No. 26 Park Lane, which was erected by the late Mr. Alfred Beit, in the manner of an old English country house, built with stone on which the lichen seems already to have almost taken its hold, and which only requires Park Lane to be turned into a moat to make still more realistic. A splendid winter garden, in defiance of chronology, is attached to the house. Mr. Beit, who died two years ago, had filled this residence with a wonderful collection of pictures, among which was that masterpiece of Sir Joshua's, "Lady Cockburn and her Children," which once hung in the National Gallery, but which, as the result of legal action, had to be returned to its former possessors. When, in course of time, it was offered for sale, Mr. Beit became its owner at an enormous price, and on his death he left it to the nation ; so that it can again be seen by all the world in its permanent home in Trafalgar Square.

Among other great houses in Park Lane, I must mention Dudley House, now the residence of Mr. J. B. Robinson, but formerly the town house of the late Earl of Dudley, whose crest and coronet may still be seen on the front of it. Here lived and died the eccentric Earl of Dudley (so created in 1827), whose absence of mind and habit of "thinking aloud" were responsible for numberless good stories, and whose gastronomic propensities were at one time famous. Some one once said of him that he was a man "who promised much, did little, and died mad," but Madame de Staël averred that "he was the only man of sentiment she had met in England." In Dudley House, he collected some fine pictures, chiefly of the Italian schools, which Waagen saw in 1835, and described with enthusiasm. The Earl died in 1833, and the late Lord Dudley added greatly to the collection, spending immense sums on the acquisition of perfect examples of art, not only as regards pictures, of which the assemblage brought together here was, as Lady Eastlake says, of the

finest description, but also china and *bric-à-brac*; giving on one occasion no less than £10,000 for that wonderful Sèvres *Garniture de Cheminée*, which had once been at Croome Abbey, Lord Coventry's place in Worcestershire.

After Lord Dudley's death, ninety-one of the most remarkable pictures from his collection were sold at Christie's, on June 25, 1892, among them being Raphael's "La Vierge à la Légende," said once to have been in Charles I.'s gallery; and the master's famous "Crucifixion," fully described by Passavant and Waagen; besides a Hobbema of transcendent merit.

Next to Dudley House is another of the large mansions in Park Lane, Brook House, which was designed by T. H. Wyatt, and was for many years the residence of Lord Tweedmouth, and one of the political centres of London. Lord Tweedmouth gave it up some years ago, and to-day it belongs to Sir Ernest Cassell.

Nearly every house in Park Lane has more or less of interest attached to it; but this is not the place to say anything about the memorable people who have lived here, except where they happen to be associated with one of the larger mansions which are dotted down it; let us therefore, after this rather lengthy *excursus*, turn our attention to one of the most interesting of these great mansions, now known as Londonderry House, but, at an earlier date, called Holderness House. True, its exterior is not elaborate, but, with its double frontage to Hertford Street and Park Lane, it has an air of solid dignity, rather restful after some of the *flamboyant* characteristics of more modern erections in this thoroughfare, and its interior is extraordinarily fine, and is surprising to those seeing it for the first time and only able to estimate its potentialities by the exterior.

Some of the great London houses indicate by their outward appearance their internal size and magnificence, and those who know the exteriors of Montagu House, Stafford House, Bridgewater House, and Dorchester House, will readily realise that within they have the spacious attributes of palaces as well as the magnificence; but others give no such indication, and in this respect are like the majority of the better London residences, in that they are much more commodious within than they can be judged to be from their outward appearance. Londonderry House is one of these, for although, as we look at it from Hertford Street or Park Lane, it is little more than a large residence, its interior arrangements are on a scale of size and splendour which bring it well within the scope of those private palaces about which I am writing.

As in nearly all the great houses of London, Londonderry House has

been as associated with well-known names in the past as it is to-day. It took its earlier title of Holdernes House from the fact of its then being the town residence of the D'Arcys, Earls of Holdernes. The last peer of this line died in 1778, and the present house was built on the site of the former residence, in or about the year 1850, from the designs of S. & B. Wyatt, the architects. When we see the treasures of ancient sculpture preserved in the Great Gallery here, it seems appropriate that the site of the place should have formerly been identified with one who, as an early member of the Society of Dilettanti, helped to do much towards the investigation and preservation of those relics of antiquity which might otherwise have been lost for ever. When, too, we remember that Lord Holdernes was a statesman, and was also, with his wife a daughter of *Sieur Doublet* a noble of Holland, closely identified with the fashionable life of his day, it is also appropriate that their one-time residence should now be in the hands of a member of a family so closely connected with the political activity of a later time, and presided over by a lady who has for so long been one of the acknowledged leaders of society.

The history of the mansion between the period of Lord Holdernes's tenancy and that of the third Marquis of Londonderry who was residing here in the original house in 1836, is somewhat obscure, but it would seem that the latter purchased the property from Lord Holdernes, somewhere between the years 1830 and 1835, and that about four years before his death in 1854, he rebuilt the house, as we have seen, practically as it remains to-day.

Lord Londonderry, who married twice—first Lady Catherine Bligh, daughter of the third Earl of Darnley, who died in 1812; and secondly, in 1819, Lady Frances Anne, daughter and heiress of Sir Henry Vane-Tempest and Anne, Countess of Antrim, who survived him—died in 1854. He was a distinguished soldier, indeed one of Wellington's ablest companions in arms in the Peninsular, as well as during the campaigns of 1814–15, in which the power of Napoleon was finally overthrown; he was also an eminent diplomatist, and among other offices, filled that of Ambassador to Vienna; while his half-brother, the second Marquis, was the well-known politician, who, as Lord Castlereagh, did so much to crush the ambition of the "Corsican upstart," as it was then the fashion to call the greatest man of the time.

The third Marquis was succeeded by his son, who died in 1884, and who was in turn succeeded by his son, the present Marquis, who married in 1875, Lady Theresa Talbot, daughter of the tenth Earl of Shrewsbury.

The present Lord Londonderry's name is as well known in the political

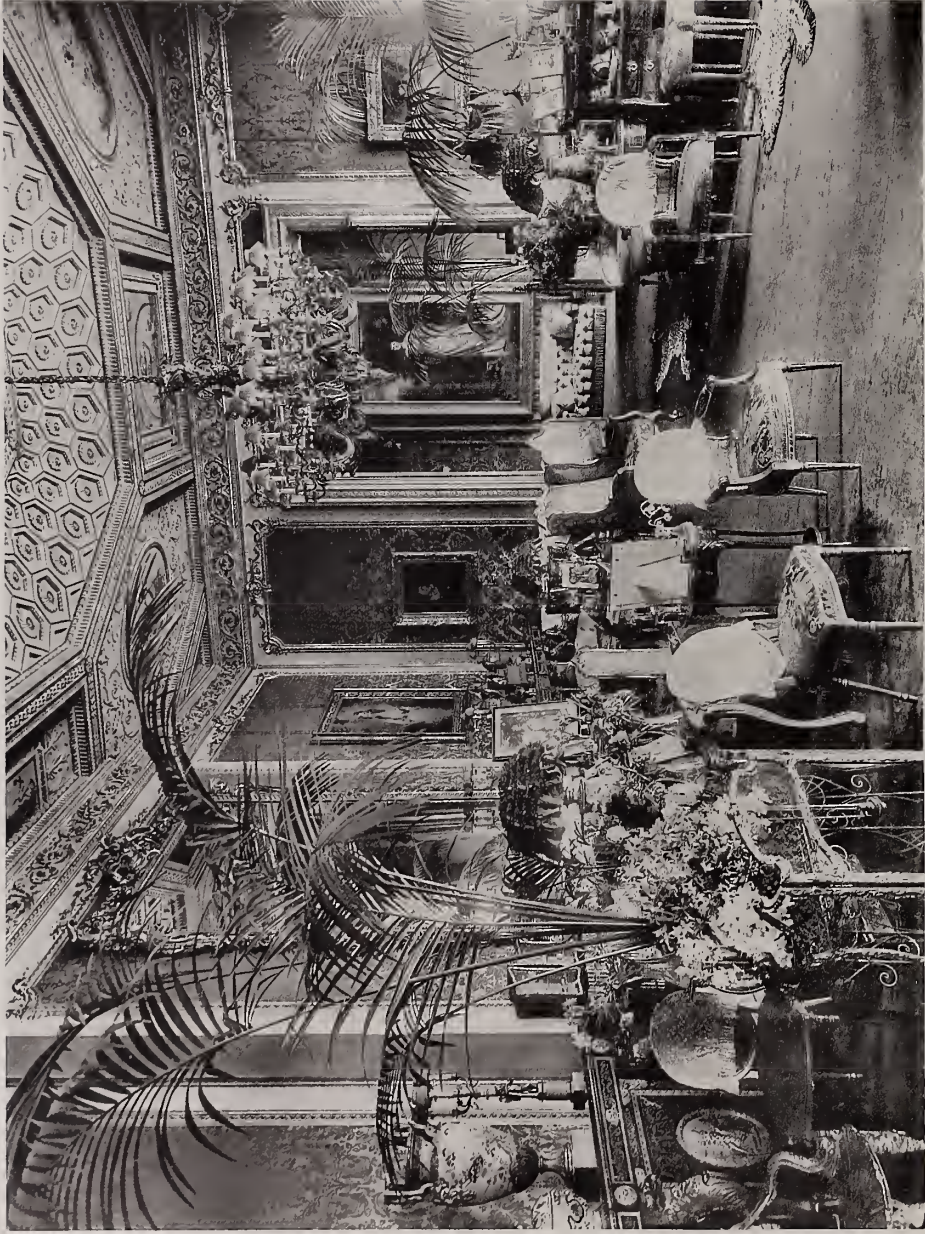


Photo H. N. King.

THE DRAWING ROOM, LONDONDERRY HOUSE.

world as is that of Lady Londonderry in the world of fashion and philanthropy ; and it is a question whether the topographer of the future will have more to say about Londonderry House as a political centre, than as the spot where so much has been done to forward good causes and to alleviate suffering and distress.

To those who know only the exterior of Londonderry House, the grand staircase which leads to the principal rooms will be a revelation ; the massive columns which flank its entrance, and easy flight of steps with its elaborate balustrade, which brings us to the commencement of its double ascent, gives us the idea of the magnificent *atrium* of some Roman palace ; and the great reception rooms on the principal floor are in size commensurate with the ample proportions of this fine staircase, although when we enter them we seem to be skipping innumerable centuries, and at a bound to have passed from ancient Italy to the France of the eighteenth century.

All these rooms communicate, and thus on occasions of great balls and receptions, the guests can pass from one to another without having to meet in those eddying throngs which make such functions in less ample houses a thing of terror for the gowns of fashion, and a pitfall for swords and spurs. Of these great apartments the state Drawing Rooms leading one from another are the chief ; here elaborately painted and decorated ceilings look down on a collection of beautiful furniture and priceless china, where the East and the West seem to have been ransacked to add splendour to the whole ; and where great mirrors reflect over again the riches assembled in endless profusion. Here hang the full-length portraits of the second and third Marquises of Londonderry, by Lawrence ; in fact the chief note of the rooms is the series of pictures from the brush of this once fashionable painter, who is also responsible for the portraits of two great ladies—Sarah, Countess of Shrewsbury, *née* Lady Sarah Beresford, daughter of Henry, second Marquis of Waterford, who was married to the eighteenth Earl of Shrewsbury in 1828 ; and Frances Anne, daughter of Sir Henry Vane-Tempest, who, as I have before noted, was the second wife of the third Marquis of Londonderry.

Here are also Viscount Castlereagh, and Lady Portarlington as a child, both by Lawrence ; and above all the painter's exquisite and famous portrait of Lady Castlereagh,¹ executed with a verve and freedom of touch worthy of Romney, and a beauty of colouring which we associate with the incomparably greater genius of Gainsborough. Lawrence was notoriously the most unequal of artists, and many of his wooden mannerisms are

¹ It was engraved by H. T. Greenhead in 1896.

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astonishingly bad for one who could on occasion do really fine work ; in this magnificent portrait, however, he seems to have thrown off the shackles of his usual convention, and to have produced a genuine masterpiece.

In the Drawing Room there also hangs a portrait of Pitt by Hoppner, and in the small ante-room at the end, a full-length in pastel of the present Lady Londonderry by Roberts ; besides which there are here, as in other parts of the house, many objects of historic interest and intrinsic value, some of which were presents from the allied Sovereigns to the third Marquis.

Lady Londonderry's Boudoir is noticeable for two things ; the superb partly domed ceiling, in which the details of carving and decoration might alone afford material for many pages of description ; and the extraordinarily fine collection of china which, in the form of plates, hangs on the walls, and in that of countless vases and figures, helps to decorate the already elaborately decorated cabinets that contain them. The whole effect is one of dazzling beauty, and makes this probably one of the most charming boudoirs in London. The general effect of the soft colouring, *gros bleu* and *rose du barri*, of the china, harmonises with the tints of the silk hangings and furniture coverings, and gives something of an exotic effect to a room whose windows look out on to the grey vista of Park Lane and the green of the Park beyond.

Another room which contains a few pictures of merit is the Ante-Room communicating with the Drawing Room. Here hang a "St. John" by Andrea del Sarto ; and a "Virgin and Child" ascribed to John Bellini ; a "Holy Family" by Francia ; as well as a "Virgin and Child" attributed to Bernard van Orlay, or Bernard of Brussels, as he is sometimes called.

The Great Gallery, used on special occasions as a Ball Room, is a very fine apartment, lighted from above by a skylight that runs its entire length. Its decorations are heavily carved and richly gilded, and in niches in the walls stand beautiful pieces of sculpture, noticeable among them being Canova's graceful "Dancing Girl," and his fine "Venus," both famous works of art. Among the portraits that hang here are full-lengths of the Czars Alexander I., Nicholas I., and Alexander II., of George IV., and Wellington, and of the second Marquis of Londonderry ; and a head of Napoleon III. is placed over one of the doors.

At that end of the room which opens on to the staircase, is Mr. Sargent's fine full-length portrait of the present Marquis of Londonderry, as he appeared at the Coronation of King Edward VII., in his robes, and bearing the Sword of State, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy a few years ago.

On the landing which forms a kind of vestibule to the Gallery, hang two interesting pictures representing Wellington surrounded by his Generals, Combermere, Picton, Beresford, and the rest ; in one of which figures the third Marquis of Londonderry, equally notable as a soldier and a statesman.

Lord Londonderry's Study, a long room divided midway by pillars, is essentially a working room, crowded with the thousand and one objects which have solely a personal interest, and which would preclude any detailed notice in a work such as this, were these things not surrounded by others of more general interest, such as French furniture and pictures and candelabra that help to carry the mind back to that great period of French decorative art when the consummate Riesener and the great Gouthière made artistic every utilitarian object which they touched. Here, among many evidences of homely twentieth-century comfort, one is transported by beautiful cabinets and elaborate chandeliers to France and its gorgeous eighteenth century ; and a portrait of the great Napoleon carries us from that artistic period to one that seemed in taste and the changed outlook on life to be removed hundreds of years from it.

The windows of the Study look out on to Hertford Street, and consequently the room is dark and somewhat sombre compared to those that receive the full light of the Park and the wide thoroughfare which divides the house from it ; such as, for instance, the Dining Room, from the windows of which one can gaze on to the fountain at the junction of Hamilton Place and Park Lane, where Chaucer and Shakespeare and Spenser are surmounted by a gilded Fame.

In this latter room the dominant note of dead white is relieved by a few interesting pictures ; characteristic works by Canaletto and Wouvermanns, Guardi and Van der Cappella, hanging next to portraits of Napoleon I. by Le Fèvre, and George III. by Sir William Beechey ; and there is also a small and quite delightful little picture of Sir Henry Vane-Tempest by Stroehling.

There is another large Dining Room at the back of the house, constructed, I believe, by the third Marquis, which is occasionally used for ball suppers and such like entertainments, for which it is admirably fitted, as it lights up well ; otherwise it is a dark room, and thus only appropriate for nocturnal festivities ; but when the table groans beneath the weight of some of Lord Londonderry's splendid silver-gilt racing trophies, such as, for instance, that won by the famous "Hambletonian," at Doncaster, in 1796, and the lights of the room are reflected in their dazzling surfaces, then it presents a scene of splendour, as it did when

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the King of Spain was entertained here, which Lucullus might have envied and Petronius described.

In spite of the magnificence of its interior, Londonderry House is essentially home-like, and what is termed "comfortable," and its splendid rooms with their massive and rich decorations are, perhaps, the less noticeable, because the eye is attracted by so many objects of personal interest.

The pictures hanging on the walls are, too, compared with such wondrous collections as those at Bridgewater House, Stafford House, or Grosvenor House, to mention but these, of relatively small account, but set side by side with the pictorial contents of many other more ambitious dwellings, they fully hold their own in interest and value; and when the importance of the family which has been for so many years now identified with the mansion is considered; when the notable gatherings which have so often taken place within its walls are remembered, Londonderry House properly takes its place among those great mansions which are at once the pride and wonder of London.



Photo J. Russell & Sons.

THE SALOON, MONTAGU HOUSE.

CHAPTER XV

MONTAGU HOUSE

HAD the magnificent conception of Inigo Jones been carried into effect, the glories of Whitehall would have more than rivalled those of the Louvre. Drawings are extant which show the splendour of the great architect's scheme; but the civil wars, culminating with that "two-handled engine" which Milton refers to in "Lycidas," supervened, and with the death of the first art-discerning ruler of this country ended all chance of that great monument of taste and judgment being completed; the beautiful relic of the Banqueting Hall being the sole survivor of a building which, had it been completed, would have more than equalled in size and beauty all the present Government offices put together.¹

But notwithstanding the failure of this scheme, old Whitehall was of immense size and importance; in fact, according to Pennant, its river frontage extended from old Parliament Street to Scotland Yard on one side of Whitehall, and as far as Spring Gardens on the other; and a drawing by Kip, showing the Palace as it was in 1714, clearly indicates the extensive area it covered, and also, it must be confessed, the want of uniformity in the various buildings which composed it.

The history of Whitehall has been specifically treated by Mr. Loftie and Canon Edgar Sheppard, besides occupying a large portion of the innumerable histories of London which the industry of topographers, from Stow and Pennant to Cunningham and Besant, has given us, and there is no need for me to here amplify what has been already so carefully recorded, but I have thus incidentally referred to it, as on a part of its site stood old Montagu House, the precursor of the splendid mansion with which I am now dealing.

The exact relative positions of the palace and Montagu House are well defined in a plan, published by the London Topographical Society

¹ It is interesting to see that the conception of a circular inner court, which is one of the features of the new Local Government Board buildings, was anticipated by Inigo Jones.

in 1900, and based on the old print of Whitehall as it was in 1681,¹ taken by John Fisher and engraved by Vertue. By this plan it will be seen that Montagu House occupies the site of various lodgings in the palace which were formerly allocated to Prince Rupert, Sir Edward Walker, the Prince of Wales, the Earl of Lauderdale, and Mrs. Kirk; and the front portion facing Whitehall, stands on part of that ample Privy Garden which extended more than half-way across the present thoroughfare, where once stood the sun-dial on which Andrew Marvell wrote a severe epigram, and where, on a celebrated occasion, honest Pepys saw "the finest smocks and linen petticoats" belonging to Lady Castlemaine fluttering in the wind; which it did him good to look at!²

It will thus be seen that no other private residence in London occupies such an historic site as does the mansion of the Duke of Buccleuch; for besides the ghosts of Carolean days that haunt this spot, it must also be remembered that so early as 1240, Hubert de Burgh built a large dwelling here, which at that time was called "More," and was situated between the Hospital of St. James, and the moor or marsh then in the possession of John Chancellor, as Smith, in his *Antiquities of Westminster*, tells us. The place having subsequently become the property of the Preaching or Black Friars, that fraternity sold it to Walter de Grey, Archbishop of York, from whose day till the fall of Wolsey it was the official residence of the holders of that See. York Place, as it was then called, owed its chief glory to the magnificent conception of the great Cardinal on whose fall in 1529, it came into the possession of Henry VIII.; and from this time till the fire which practically demolished it in 1698, it was the chief royal residence in London.

Without attempting to fill up this outline, it will, I think, be sufficient, to enable the imagination to rehabilitate the life of four centuries, and to people the site of Montagu House with a crowd of historical personages. Hubert de Burgh, the great champion of civil rights; the princely priest with his liveried army; the burly monarch who concentrated in his person all the great qualities and grave defects of the Tudors; the "fair virgin throned in the west" who inherited those great qualities; the martyr-king who lost his throne and his life for an idea; and the merry monarch who was perhaps too clever as well, maybe, as too indolent to run the risk of losing either. These, with the crowd of notable personages surrounding them, may well be conjured up, as we stand on the spot where they once moved and had their being. But we are rather now

¹ This has been ingeniously done by superimposing the outlines of the palace on a current Ordnance Survey.

² *Diary*, May 21, 1662.

concerned with the house that arose on the site of the old palace, than with the illustrious ones who peopled the latter.

Almost twenty years after the fire which destroyed the whole of the palace with the exception of the Banqueting Hall and some unimportant buildings adjoining it, and devoured those pictures and furniture which Evelyn bemoans in his diary, Robert, Viscount Molesworth, obtained a lease for a term of thirty-one years from 1719, of a small piece of ground having about seventy feet frontage with a depth of ten feet; five years later Colonel Charles Churchill also obtained a lease of another piece of land adjoining on the south, and thus lying between Lord Molesworth's acquisition and the river; the extent of the whole, together with, as we shall see, a further portion, being practically equivalent to the site which Montagu House and its grounds now occupy.

It would appear that soon after, both these leases became vested in John, second Duke of Montagu, for, in 1731, we find him petitioning for an extension of them and also for a fresh lease of additional land adjoining. These extensions he obtained for a further term of thirty-one years, and immediately began the erection of old Montagu House, which appears to have been completed two years later, as it was then valued at £200 per annum. A drawing is preserved in the British Museum showing the old house as it appeared in 1825, and from this we can see how, commodious though it was, it fell short of the splendid palace which was to replace it.¹ The stables are shown adjoining it to the east, and it was for the accommodation of these buildings that the Duke petitioned for a lease of the piece of ground on which they stood, in 1733, in which year he also obtained a fresh lease of the whole property for fifty years. On the south-west side of the house, as shown in the drawing, are obvious additions to the main structure, and it was probably with a view to their erection that the Duke again applied for another lease of certain land "lately used as a Passage to the water side," at which time he also petitioned for a lease of some of the foreshore "where," as the memorial quaintly phrases it, "quantities of mudd and filth of all kinds collect and settle, to the great nuisance and damage of your memorialist, whose habitation is thereby rendered, after all the expense he hath been at, very unwholesome."²

The Duke of Montagu, who made these various applications for the improvement of his property, and whose portrait by Kneller bears out the remark of Stukeley that "his aspect was grand, manly, and full of

¹ The fine view of Whitehall by Canaletto, which now hangs in Montagu House, shows the old residence on the right hand. This picture used to be at Dalkeith, where Waagen saw it, and described it as "very interesting."

² Quoted in *The Old Palace of Whitehall*, by the Rev. Canon Sheppard.

dignity,"¹ died in 1749, and for a time the Crown seems to have enjoyed a not unmerited rest from further applications for renewal of leases. However in 1767 the Duke's executors bestirred themselves, and obtained, in the following year, a new reversionary lease of all the premises comprised in the former leases on behalf, in trust, of Mary, Countess of Cardigan, the Duke's daughter and heiress, whose husband was created, in 1766, Duke of Montagu, and who, on the death of his father-in-law in 1749, had assumed the name and arms of Montagu. This Duke, who died in 1790, left only one child (Elizabeth) surviving at his death, who became Duchess of Buccleuch, having married in 1767 the third Duke of Buccleuch and fifth Duke of Queensberry; and she, under the will of her grandfather, John, had a life interest in the house and grounds, which thus, through her, passed to their present ducal owner. In 1810, a sixty-one years' lease of the whole was granted to Henry, Duke of Buccleuch, which lease, however, was surrendered in 1855, and fifteen years later a fresh one for ninety-nine years was granted; the fifth Duke having begun the erection of Montagu House, which is to-day one of the most imposing of the private palaces of London, in 1858.

William Burn, the architect of the mansion, chose as his leading *motif* that French Renaissance style which is so particularly effective where ample space is available for its proper development, and which so well harmonises with surrounding buildings when they are, as is here the case, constructed of stone; the mansarde roof which has been most unjustly stigmatised as an architectural absurdity, adds dignity to the building, and helps to give its elevation an importance which, in consequence of the lower level of the ground on which the house is built, would hardly have been attained by any other scheme of architecture.

An interesting circumstance connected with the erection of Montagu House is the fact that when the original edifice was pulled down, practically the whole of the materials was ground down and formed into concrete for the foundations of the new house, and thus helped with other elaborate methods to make it water-tight; a necessary precaution, when it is remembered that in those days the Embankment was not formed, and the tides of the adjacent river were even less under control than they are at present; added to which, two streams formerly ran from this spot to the ornamental water in St. James's Park, the closing

¹ It was *à propos* of the will of this Duke that Walpole thus writes to Montagu on July 20, 1749: "There are two codicils, one in favour of his servants, the other of his dogs, cats, and creatures, which was a little unnecessary, for Lady Cardigan has exactly his turn for saving everything's life. As he was making the codicil, one of his cats jumped on his knee. 'What,' says he, 'have you a mind to be a witness, too! You can't, for you are a party concerned.'"

of which caused some of the adjacent residences in Whitehall to crack badly.

Of the many noble houses which at one time clustered together on this spot, Montagu House is the only one that survives, in its reconstructed form, as the town house of the family with which it has always been identified. As we have seen, in a former chapter, Richmond House has disappeared altogether, and Richmond Terrace stands on its site; Portland House has long since passed away, as has Carrington House to make room for the new War Office buildings, while Holderness House and Pembroke House, to mention but these, have been metamorphosed into subsidiary Government offices. Montagu House alone stands in solitary glory, the most easterly of those great houses which form one of the most dignified features of London. When the fifth Duke obtained his long lease, he was bound by its conditions to spend £20,000 on the house he was to erect, but although the stone for its construction was brought straight from Portland by water and landed on the garden side of the building, where the Embankment now runs, and thus a large saving in freightage effected, the total cost amounted to nearly five times that sum!

The interior, both in decoration and contents, is fully commensurate with its outward appearance, and shows that not only was money lavishly expended on its beautification, but that consummate taste and judgment were also exercised. Five great rooms: the Drawing Room, the Ball Room, the Dining Room, the Saloon, and the Duke's Sitting Room, are particularly noticeable, not only for the beauty of their ceilings, which are alone things of joy in themselves, but also on account of the splendid furniture, the exquisite porcelain, as well as those masterpieces in half-a-dozen arts which we are accustomed to call *objets d'art*, probably because their *provenance* is principally from the land of Boulle and Riesener, Pigalle and Gouthière, and also because, although our country is so rich in their possession, we have not yet coined a word that seems to logically suffice for their description as a whole. But the chief importance of the collection which is contained in Montagu House consists in its wonderful Vandycks and its incomparable series of miniatures.

The Duke's Sitting Room contains several portraits of particular interest, and there also hang on the walls four landscapes by Zuccarelli of great merit, as well as two by Jacques Courtois, both portraying those cavalry engagements in the pictorial description of which this painter was so happy; Guido Reni is represented by "The Magdalen," arrayed in loose pink drapery; and there are two Italian landscapes by Jan Asselin. The portraits include a head and shoulders of Sir Ralph Winwood, whose collection of State documents is a standard authority

for the reigns of Elizabeth and her two successors, by Mierevelt ; and a presentment of himself by John Riley, whom Walpole calls "one of the best native painters that has flourished in England," who, had he possessed a quarter of Kneller's vanity, "might have persuaded the world he was as great a master," and who lies buried in Bishopsgate Church. Another portrait of a painter hanging in this room is that of himself by Furini, who, in his more characteristic work, is said to have combined the beauty of Guido with the grace of Albano. From Lely's hand is a head and bust of the Duke of Monmouth, while Robert Walker is responsible for a "kit-cat" picture of the Protector, who employed him not infrequently to portray his coarse features ; but a greater than Walker is here in the person of William Dobson, of whom there are two works ; one a portrait of Hobbes ; the other that of George Gordon, second Marquis of Huntly. Dobson, who succeeded Vandyck as Sergeant Painter to the King, accompanied Charles I. to Oxford during the civil wars, and there painted portraits of him and several of the nobility, among whom may have been the subject of this latter picture, who we know was a devoted royalist.

There is also here a remarkably fine portrait, by Beechy, of the Duke of Montagu in the Windsor uniform and wearing the star of the Garter, as well as a life-size picture of the fifth Duke of Buccleuch, represented as sitting in this very room, by Knighton Warren ; but the gems of the apartment are from the hands of Reynolds and Gainsborough. Sir Joshua's canvas represents Lady Elizabeth Montagu, Duchess of Buccleuch, daughter of the Duke of Montagu, and wife of the third Duke of Buccleuch. She is represented in old age, seated and wearing a dress of grey silk, with a shawl hanging over her arms. The picture is one of the few signed by the painter, and bears his initials and the date, 1755, upon it. Lady Elizabeth must have been one of the hundred and twenty people who sat to Reynolds in this year, a year when his fame was increasing by leaps and bounds ; but curiously enough her name does not appear in his list of sitters. By Gainsborough, is the portrait of Lady Mary Montagu, daughter of the second Duke of Montagu, and afterwards wife of the Earl of Cardigan, created Duke of Montagu, in 1766, whose portrait by Beechy I have just mentioned.

In the Duchess's Boudoir hang several interesting pictures, notably two portraits, male and female, by Pourbus the elder ; and particularly a work by one of the many followers of Holbein, Penne or Toto or Horneband, who were all in Henry VIII.'s employment, representing the King, Edward, Prince of Wales, and the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth, with the inevitable Will Somers, the jester, in the background.



Photo J. Russell & Sons.

THE DRAWING ROOM, MONTAGU HOUSE

But it is in the Drawing Room, the Ante-Room, the Gallery, the West Drawing Room, and the Pink Sitting Room, that the bulk of the Duke's collection hangs. In the first-named apartment there are twenty-two pictures, among which are three Rembrandts and a Rubens of supreme beauty and interest. Of the Rembrandts, that of Saskia, the artist's first wife, whom he frequently painted, was formerly in the collection of the Duc de Tallard, and not until Mr. M'Kay, junior, discovered the signature of Rembrandt, and the date 1653 upon it, at the bottom left-hand corner of the canvas, was it known to be a signed and dated picture, which, perhaps, accounts for Michel's silence concerning it. It is a gloriously luminous work ; and the elaborate dress worn by Saskia has enabled the artist to indulge in some of those rich golden tones for which he was unsurpassed. Rembrandt's portrait of himself shows him in nearly front view, and wearing a dark velvet cap and a brown cloak ; it is signed, and dated 1659, and has been engraved by Earlom and described by Smith ;¹ while the third work of this master is the portrait of his mother, painted probably in 1655, and engraved by M'Ardell. Michel refers to it simply as a portrait of an old woman, and conjectures the date of its production to be 1657.

Rubens is here represented by one of his glorious but not very common landscapes, and known as "The Watering-place," which once belonged to Tallard, and was sold in 1756 for £400. It is a fine example of the painter's command of breadth and tone, and is one of those pictures to which engraving can hardly do justice, although Van Uden, Brookshaw, and Brown have each tried their hand at it. Although there are other fine landscapes hanging in this room by such masters of the art as Gaspar Poussin, Claude, Jan Both, and Van der Heyden, Rubens's canvas stands out conspicuously from among them for dignity of handling and richness of tone.

Of the works by the Italian school there is a "Virgin and Child" by Garofalo, and another by a little known painter, Lattanzio Maniardi, a pupil of the Carracci ; as well as others by Mario Nuzzi, called Mario da Fiori from his love of, and success in, depicting flower pieces, and Sebastian Bourdon, Leonardo, and Carrucci, commonly called Pontormo ; and there is a monochrome by Andrea Mantegna, representing "The Cumæan Sybil offering the Prophetic Leaves to Tarquin."

The Dutch masters represented in this room include William Van der Velde, with two pictures respectively of "Vessels in a Gale," and "Dutch Men-of-war in a Calm," signed W. V. V. ; David Teniers, the younger ; two characteristic Wouvermanns ; and a beautiful Cuyp, of a canal scene, with barges preparing to sail.

¹ *Catalogue raisonné*, vol. vii. p. 88.

The catholicity of taste observable in the Drawing Room is also to be found among the pictures in the Ante-Room. Here the Italian, Spanish, Dutch, and Flemish schools are represented, and here, too, hangs Sir Godfrey Kneller's portrait of John, Duke of Montagu, as a young man, as well as Eustache le Sueur's "Joseph of Arimathæa."

Of the Italians, we have Raphael, with a portion of a cartoon, apparently an "Ecce Homo"; Carlo Dolci, and Solimena, and Andrea del Sarto; Pietro da Cortona and Carlo Maratti, represented by the sacred subjects with which their names are generally associated. The two Murillos here, represent respectively "The Virgin and Saviour," and "St. John the Baptist as a Child," seated in a rocky landscape; and there are also in this room landscapes by Peter Roos, and Cuyp; three of Van der Neer's familiar and beautiful moonlight scenes, and *genre* pieces by Ostade, Teniers, and Peter de Hooghe, the latter a fine picture portraying a lady knitting and seated in a room, through the door of which is seen a distant view of a town bathed in sunshine.

In the Gallery among the twenty-seven works that hang on the walls, there are four of Monnoyer's graceful flower pieces. This painter adorned the palaces of Versailles, Marly, Meudon, and Trianon with his work, and thus attracted the attention of Lord Montagu, then Ambassador to France, at whose invitation he came to England where he remained some twenty years, during which time he was largely occupied in producing those flower pieces for Montagu House, which are considered the finest of his works.

Another foreigner who visited this country was John Griffier, the friend of Rembrandt and Adrian Van der Velde, the manner of which latter, by-the-bye, he was wont to imitate, whose "View of the Thames, looking over Westminster Bridge," hangs in the Gallery. Griffier came to England in 1667, and died here in 1718; his chief patron was the Duke of Beaufort, but he seems to have been well supported generally. There is also a similar view by Canaletto, who, it will be remembered, came to this country on the advice of his friend Amiconi, and during his two years' stay here produced a number of fine and interesting views of London.¹ Another particularly valuable pictorial "document," is Marcellas Laroon the younger's picture of "A Party in Old Montagu House," because it not only shows us part of the interior of the original mansion, but also because it indicates that the Duke of Montagu was one of Laroon's many patrons; while another topographical picture in the Gallery is Anderson's "View on the Thames, looking towards Westminster Bridge," which is signed, and dated 1810.

¹ At Dalkeith Palace, in the Canaletto Room, are ten of his masterpieces in this *genre*.

Of the portraits, there is that of William Dobson, by the artist himself; a picture of Henry VIII., of the school of Holbein; Ravesteign's picture of an unknown man; Sir Peter Lely's Elizabeth Percy, Duchess of Somerset, as a child, and the same artist's presentment of Elizabeth, Countess of Northumberland, who afterwards married Ralph, Duke of Montagu; and a copy of the head of Marie de Medicis by Rubens; while from the brush of Sir Antonio Moro, is that of a man in a black doublet, whose identity is not satisfactorily accounted for, and Zuccero's Edward VI. on a white horse, of which picture it is said that it originally represented Francis I., but that the head of the English monarch was substituted, probably by Sir E. Montagu, who was the King's tutor, and to whom the work belonged.

In the West Drawing Room are some fine examples of the Dutch school of landscape painting by such artists as Jacobus van Artois; Jacob Ruysdael, of whom there are two; Pijnacker, and Paul Brill; Van Romeyn, and Van der Neer. There is also Canaletto's extremely interesting and valuable "View of Whitehall," taken from the vicinity of old Montagu House. Besides these works, are a number of pictures representing sacred subjects, such as Giulio Romano's "Virgin and Child," Solimena's "Mary Magdalen washing the Feet of the Saviour," Bassano's "Entombment," and Vandyck's "Virgin Mary and Infant Christ"; and among the portraits is that of a lady in a crimson dress by Lorenzo Lotto, and a portrait of a man by the same artist; a full-length of James, first Duke of Hamilton, by Gonzales Coques, as well as that painter's copy of Vandyck's "Lady Frances Seymour, Countess of Southampton"; a portrait of Martin Luther, by Lucas Cranach, and Clouet's head of Anthony, King of Navarre; while, to make an end, Frans Hals is represented by a pair—one, a young lad playing on the flute, the other, a young girl dressed in a yellow gown, and both executed with that *bravura* which stamps all the best work of this great master.

The portraits in the Drawing Room include that of a lady by Sir Antonio Moro; Kneller's James, Duke of Monmouth, and Frances Brudenell, daughter of Lord Brudenell; Lely's Anna Maria, daughter of Robert, second Earl of Cardigan, and wife of Francis, Earl of Shrewsbury; the same painter's Lady Dorothy Brudenell, Countess of Westmoreland; and a remarkably fine full-length, by Raphael Mengs, of John, Marquis of Monthermer, son of George, Duke of Montagu, who, as a member of the Dilettanti Society, as well as on his own initiative, was one of those noblemen who helped to resuscitate art in this country at a period when it had sunk to a very low position. But the glory of the room consists in the four Vandycks, which are alone sufficient to stamp

the collection at Montagu House as one of extraordinary merit, and to prove the incontestable supremacy in portraiture of this artist's best work. They are all full-lengths, and represent Henry Rich, Earl of Holland; George Gordon, second Marquis of Huntly; James Stuart, Duke of Richmond, and James Hamilton, Duke of Hamilton; all devoted adherents of the royal cause, and three of them sharing the fate of their royal master, whose portrait should surely hang here in their company.

Among the pictures in the Pink Drawing Room are no less than seven by Monnoyer, whom I have before mentioned, two more of whose works hang in the Saloon; besides these there are also examples of the consummate technical skill of Mieris (dated 1660); of the representation of church architecture of Peter Neeffs; of Schalcken's wondrous candle-light effects; and of Jan Steen's observation of contemporary life; to mention but a few of the works hanging in this apartment.

Besides the splendid pictures in Montagu House, one of the most interesting of its pictorial contents is undoubtedly the remarkable series of some forty¹ small pictures *en grisaille* or *gouache* by Vandyck, forming a small picture-gallery in themselves, of the illustrious men: princes, generals, and painters of the day, which hang in the, so-called, Secretary's Room. They are each but $9\frac{1}{2}$ in. $\times$ $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. in size, but there is a breadth and freedom of handling about most of them (for they are of unequal merit, and two appear to be old copies) which proclaim them the work of the master hand. Dr. Waagen saw them on one occasion, and he refers to them in his *Art Treasures in Great Britain*, where he says that they are obviously not all from Vandyck's own hand: "While his animation of conception and light spirited touch are recognised in the bright silvery tones of many of them, others, on the other hand, are mechanical in execution, with a heavy brown tone, which in the shadows is very disagreeable." Those which the critic thus distinguishes as being less good than the best, he thinks were probably the work of Janson von Ceulen, who in portraiture showed some affinity to the greater artist. As this painter resided in England, it is certainly not improbable that Vandyck procured his assistance in this work. Waagen sets his hall-mark on the fine and characteristic portraits of Spinola, and the three-quarter face of Rubens, as being by Vandyck himself, while another (full-face) portrait of Rubens, as well as one of Charles I., he attributes to Von Ceulen, although it is a question whether Vandyck would have handed over the portrayal of these two particular portraits (one of a friend, the other of a royal patron) to a lesser artist than himself.

¹ Lord Rosebery possesses four small portraits *en grisaille*, by Vandyck, which were originally at Hamilton Palace, probably replicas of those here.

These pictures formed a portion of the original series of paintings which were engraved by Pontius de Jode, Bolswert, Vorsterman, and others, and were published under the title of *Icones principum virorum doctorum*, &c., and according to Smith,¹ the whole of this collection formerly belonged to Sir Peter Lely, at whose sale, in 1680, it was purchased by Ralph Montagu, Esq., for the sum of £115.

The two which appear to be copies, portraits of Cornelius Van der Geest and Artus Wolfart, were bought subsequently, and although, if looked at by themselves, they might easily deceive the unwary, when compared with the rest their lack of breadth and difference of tone is sufficiently marked to stamp them as not being by the master's hand, or even by that of Von Ceulen.

In this gallery of historical and artistic portraits are represented some of the most famous of Vandyck's contemporaries from princes to painters; from noble ladies to connoisseurs and book-collectors. Here are Charles I. and Gaston d'Orleans, the brother of Louis XIII.; Frederic Henry of Nassau, a son of William the Silent, and the Archduke Ferdinand, Governor of the Low Countries; here, too, is Geneviève d'Urphé, Countess of Croye, and Emilie de Solms, wife of Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, and the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, daughter of Philip II., who married the Archduke Albert, and died in 1633; here is Don Diego Philip de Guzman, Marquis de Legunes, and Don Emanuel Frockas, Comte de Feria; while among the contemporary painters one finds Adam de Coster, Rubens, and Vandyck himself, Frans Francken and Adrian Brouwer; Van Balen and Simon de Vos; and with these the learned Lipsius, Gevartius the celebrated lawyer, and Peiresc, whose fame as a scholar has been almost eclipsed by his celebrity as a book-collector.

Vandyck conceived the idea of thus recording the features of his illustrious contemporaries, when in Italy, and during the remainder of his life he seems never to have missed an opportunity of adding to the collection, and at his death he had completed no less than eighty-six portraits. Martin Van den Euden undertook the publishing of them; but on the painter's decease, Giles Hendriex appears to have become possessor of the plates (some of which were etched by Vandyck himself), and to have published one hundred portraits (the additional seventeen being probably executed to his order), under the title of *The Iconography of Van Dyck*. This was brought out in 1645; and a second edition which appeared contained eight additional portraits. Later still, a publisher of Antwerp, named Jean Meyssens, produced yet another edition

¹ *Catalogue raisonné*, vol. iii. p. 82.

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containing still more heads, and at the beginning of the eighteenth century there were no less than one hundred and twenty-eight plates in the series.

The collection of miniatures, or "pictures in little," as they used to be called, at Montagu House, is, with the possible exception of those in the royal palaces, unrivalled. Many of these were inherited from the Duchess of Montagu; and the fifth Duke made, by purchases at various times, great additions to the collection; and it is interesting to know that some of the most remarkable once graced the cabinets of Charles I. Here is so marvellous an assemblage of masterpieces of such men as Holbein, Nicholas Hilliard, Isaac and Peter Oliver, Cooper, Hoskins, Flatman, Lens, and Cosway, to mention but these, that to say anything in detail of a tithe of them is impossible. They hang in square cases on the walls of the Ball Room, Gallery, and other rooms, in some instances over forty in a single frame, and one is overwhelmed by the beauty, the delicacy and richness, the perfect art contained in these tiny representations of the great ones of generation after generation. Henry VIII. and his court stand for Holbein; Hilliard portrays Elizabeth and the remarkable men she gathered round her; Isaac and Peter Oliver give us the period covered by the reigns of James I. and Charles I.; while with the great Samuel Cooper we have the Cromwellian period and the days of the merry monarch.

Here are two portraits of the Protector by the man of whom Walpole once wrote: "If his portrait of Cromwell could be so enlarged I do not know but Vandyck would appear less great by comparison." It is said that Oliver made it a condition of sitting for his portrait that no copies should be made, and that one day Cooper, unmindful, or regardless of the injunction, was busily engaged on making a *replica* of this very miniature, when suddenly a hand over his shoulder seized the work, and the redoubtable voice of the Protector was suddenly heard exclaiming, "Ho, ho! Master Cooper, this is not to be"; and the great man walked off with the handiwork of the recalcitrant painter!

Indeed this collection contains probably the finest work of Cooper extant. It is impossible to give anything like an exhaustive list of the miniatures by this great master, but I may mention such portraits as those of various members of the Cromwell family, John Milton, Algernon Sidney, "Hudibras" Butler, Waller, Titus Oates, Prince Rupert, Lord and Lady Chesterfield, Nell Gwynn, Lady Fauconberg, the Duchess of Richmond, Lady Derby, the Duke of Albemarle, and both James II. and Charles II., nearly all in superlative condition, and many of them bearing the painter's signature.

The Hilliards include portraits of Elizabeth and James I., the Duke of Lennox, Arabella Stuart, and the Countess of Pembroke. By Isaac Oliver we find presentments of Catherine Howard and Henry, Prince of Wales, Lord Herbert of Cherbury and the Earl of Devon, Lord Holland, and Drummond of Hawthornden, and Lady Nottingham; while the work of Peter Oliver includes Charles I. and the Duke of Buckingham, Sir Kenelm Digby and Lord Ormonde, Sir Philip Sidney and Lord Bacon. Hoskins gives us Charles II. and John Selden, John Evelyn and Sir Benjamin Rudyerd, besides a host of those brilliant nobles who made the court of Charles as notable for wit as it was for vice. Dixon and Bettes and Crosse help to add to the gallery, and by the latter is a particularly interesting portrait of Pepys. Flatman is responsible for two likenesses of Cowley, and others; Bernard Lens for portraits of Pope and Prior, as well as of George I.; and Cosway contributes a picture of the Princess Amelia, besides a host of others. It will thus be seen what a remarkable gallery of historical portraits is here preserved in these exquisite and priceless little "pictures in little." Many of them were once in the Strawberry Hill collection, which also helps to give them an interest, if one were wanted, other than their intrinsic excellence. From Charles I.'s collection came the set of eight royal portraits mounted in a black frame on which are stamped the initials of the royal amateur; while another with the same *provenance* from Henry VIII. is attributed to Holbein; and better than all perhaps, the portraits of James I., his Queen and family, in a single frame, also once belonged to the martyr King.

It is almost safe to say that there is hardly a distinguished individual from the days of Henry VIII. to those of George I. who is not represented here; there is not a great miniature painter in all that long period some of the finest of whose work does not grace this superb collection. The large quarto private catalogue runs to 170 pages of quite short descriptions of the notable people represented, and the mere names of the artists who have given to some of the lesser known ones their chance of immortality. There are eighteen frames in the gallery, seven in the Duchess's Sitting Room, and others elsewhere, containing an aggregate of no less than seven hundred and sixty miniatures, nearly all of which are of supreme historical importance, and practically all of the highest intrinsic value and beauty.

There are besides the miniatures, enamels by Petitot and his school; Zincke, Boit, Prewett, Bindon, and Bone; and there is a portrait of Louis XIV. by C. Le Febure, which although technically a miniature, is of the size of a small picture, and gives an excellent idea of the appearance, when dressed in all the paraphernalia of majesty, of *le roi soleil*!

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Montagu House is a splendid example of what taste and judgment, aided by practically unlimited means, can produce in the way of domestic architecture. Its elevation is as imposing as its structural qualities are substantial; and it is the more noticeable as being the only really great private mansion remaining in the spot where once so many clustered. Although compared with other great noble residences, it is isolated, at the same time its isolation is a splendid one, for it not only stands, ramparted about by its own grounds, midway between the Embankment and Whitehall, two of the finest thoroughfares in London, but it lies beneath the shadow, as it were, of the Abbey, and occupies, as we have seen, the actual site of what was once a royal palace; it is for this reason, as well as for the beauty and value of its contents, and the illustrious family with whom it is connected, that it remains one of the finest of the great houses of London.

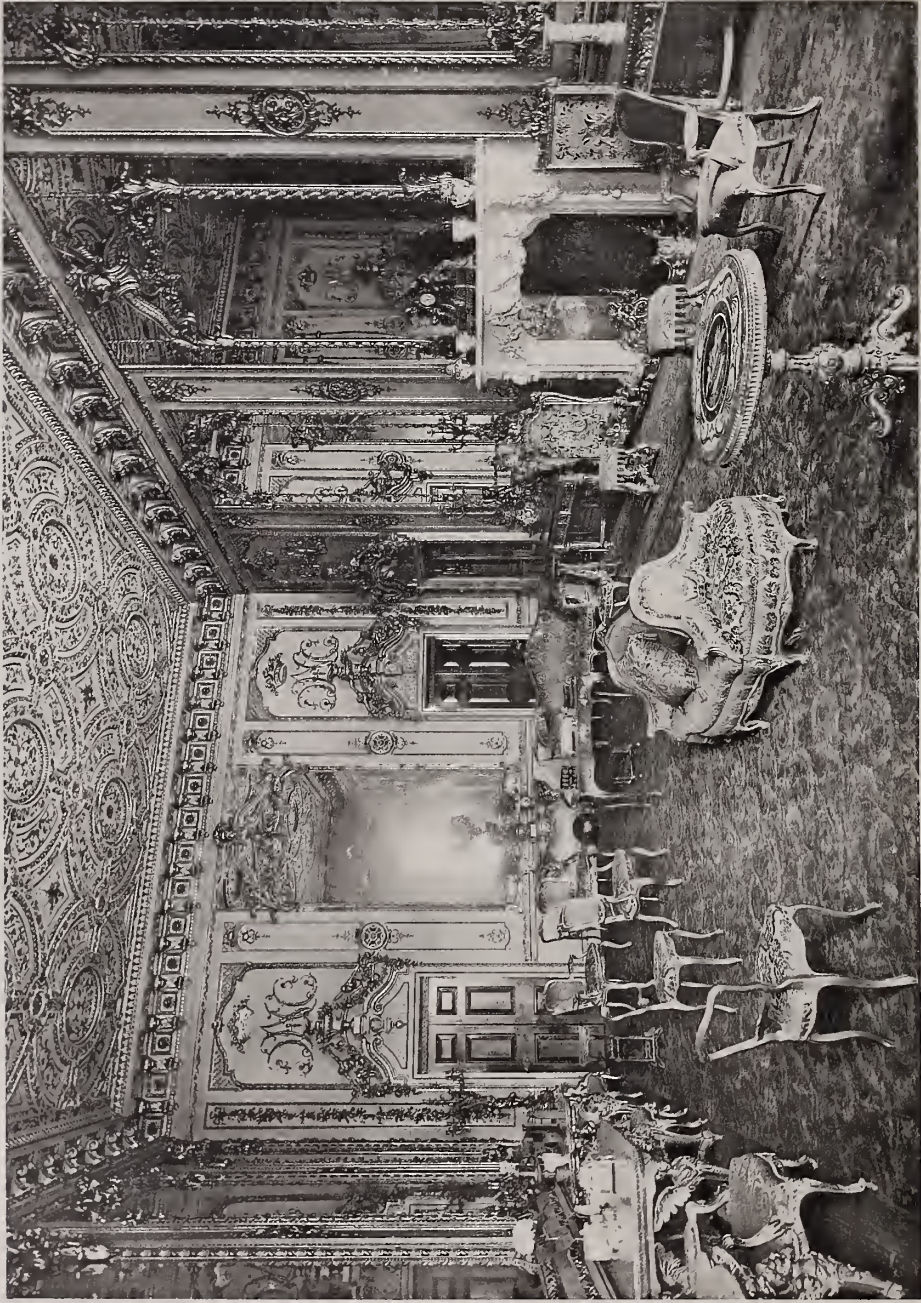


Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE BALL ROOM, NORFOLK HOUSE.

CHAPTER XVI

NORFOLK HOUSE

ALL that can be said about St. James's Square has been said by Mr. Arthur Dasent in his book on the subject, and by Mr. Wheatley who included a chapter on it in his *Round about Piccadilly and Pall Mall*, while with the help of these great authorities, I have more recently dealt with it in another work. It is therefore hardly necessary to here say anything more about the Square itself, especially as this chapter is specifically concerned with the most important house in it. If Montagu House, Whitehall, is the only great mansion in London occupying the site of what was once a splendid royal palace, so Norfolk House, St. James's, is the only one in which a ruler of these realms first saw the light. If only for this reason, Norfolk House has a peculiar and particular claim to be included among those "private palaces" about which I am writing; but apart from this, the size of the mansion and the beauty of its contents would have given it, in any case, a right to a place; which right is still more accentuated when we remember that it is the town residence of the first noble in the land, whose great family has played an important part in the history of the country from time immemorial.

When Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, had obtained a building lease of ground in St. James's Fields, which he afterwards laid out as St. James's Square, he reserved for himself a plot of land, with a frontage of sixty-five feet, at the south-east corner, next to where John Street runs, and here about the year 1667 he erected a house for his own occupation. This house had its entrance in Pall Mall, or Katherine Street as it was then officially called out of compliment to Charles II.'s Portuguese Queen, but when Pall Mall was covered with houses, Lord St. Albans caused another way to it to be constructed from Charles Street, which, by-the-bye, still forms the entrance to the stables of Norfolk House in that thoroughfare. Here, with such exceptions as his residence in Somerset House, when in attendance on the Queen Dowager, Henrietta Maria, whose second husband he is popularly supposed to have been, or at Whitehall in his capacity as Lord Chamberlain (1671-4), he dwelt, until the

Square was completed, when he removed to the larger house which he had built on the north side, on the site now occupied by the Portland Club House, Lord Kinnaid's, and the Hon. Rupert Guinness's, viz. Nos. 9, 10, and 11, and which was at a later date one of the immense residences of the "Princely Chandos." Lord St. Albans' sojourn on part of the site of Norfolk House extended to just ten years.

The southern portion of the large site was afterwards allocated to Lord Bellasis, and is now occupied by London House and the northern half of Norfolk House. But it was not till 1748-51 that the present mansion was erected on this double site, and it was in the old Norfolk House, part of which still exists behind the present mansion, that George III. and the Duke of York were born.

This old house to-day presents a curious spectacle. It stands across the square piece of garden behind the present Norfolk House, and outwardly preserves practically the same appearance that it must have presented to those who came to pay their court to the Prince and Princess of Wales. But pass through the door, and all is altered: the large room on the right of the entrance is now converted into the muniment room, with its walls covered by receptacles for deeds, patents, leases, letters innumerable, but all carefully arranged and labelled; and the corresponding room to the left has the appearance of having at some time been converted into a kitchen. But the most curious alteration is in the staircase, which seems from the lowness of the ceiling to have been divided into one or two extra floors dove-tailed into the original structure; this, too, is evidenced by the ceiling of the lofty principal reception room on the first floor above the muniment room, which has been divided by a wall and shows the larger portion of the still elaborately painted *plafond* in various stages of decay, while the smaller portion, from which all the colour has long since departed, appears as the low roof of a secondary floor. The other large reception room on this floor has in the past been converted into a species of laundry, and the drying apparatus still hangs in a sort of allegory of time's drying effect on the whole structure. In the basement are almost monastic cellars, and there is a curious shaft-like passage which investigation has shown to lead to a well, but for what purpose constructed only the builder could tell.

It is probable that when the ninth Duke built the present mansion, he caused these alterations to be made in the old house, and used it for the various domestic purposes which would appear to have been carried on there. To-day it is certainly the most ducal of lumber rooms; and there are few people, who know the exterior of Norfolk House as they do their own hands, who would guess that behind it stands another

residence if not so imposing, certainly, when we consider it as a royal residence and the birthplace of a King, more historic.

Among the various leases, assignments, letters, &c., relating to old Norfolk House among the ducal muniments, is a plan on vellum, showing the extent of that portion of the property which, as we shall see, the ninth Duke purchased from the executors of Joseph Banks. It is signed by John Talbot, who had an interest in the property, as well as by his wife.

The outlines of the histories of the two distinct houses and their inhabitants before the rebuilding of Norfolk House, claim a word, as being the joint forerunners of the mansion as we know it to-day.

After Lord St. Albans had removed to his new residence, St. Albans House was occupied for a short time by Sir John Duncombe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, however, appears to have resided here for not longer than two years, as there is extant among the Duke of Norfolk's muniments, a bill of sale on his furniture, dated September 9, 1676. This deed, which was made in favour of Lord St. Albans, Richard Frith the builder, who had an interest in the house, and Lewis, Lord Duras, Baron of Holdenbury, states among other matters that the said Frith undertakes to sell to Lord Duras the whole of Duncombe's furniture and effects, and is chiefly interesting in that it specifies the entire contents of the mansion; and in the faded writing of the document we can trace the style of furnishing and decoration of a great house during the reign of the Merry Monarch. Here are rooms—there appear to have been a baker's dozen of principal ones, as well as servants' accommodation in the attics and basement—hung with gilded leather or tapestry on which pictures were ruthlessly hung, chairs of velvet and damask with arms embroidered thereon, the iron chimney backs and andirons which may still be seen in many a mansion and many a curiosity shop, the "Turkey-wove carpet" in the great Parlour, the green damask hangings bordered with yellow in the Dining Room, the Isabella damask bed in the principal bedroom, with its feather bed and curtains of taffeta, and quilt, and so on.

Burnet tells us that Duncombe was "a judicious man, but very haughty, and apt to raise enemies"; in any case we find him here fallen from his high estate, and Lewis de Duras, Marquis of Blanquefort and Earl of Feversham, to give him his high-sounding titles, reigning in his stead. This 'fine gentleman and good soldier,' as Sir John Reresby calls him, succeeded to the Earldom of Feversham, in 1677, having married Lady Mary Sondes, daughter and co-heiress of George Sondes, Earl of Feversham, a year previously. Reresby's praise is distinctly partial, for

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the share that Duras had in the suppression of Monmouth's rebellion may have been justified by policy but hardly on humanitarian principles. The fact that he was a nephew of the great Turenne is apparently the only claim he had to be connected remotely with military genius. During his tenure of St. Albans House, he seems to have heavily mortgaged it, and to have let it to a variety of people, among whom the Portuguese and Spanish Ambassadors were numbered, as well as the Earls of Conway, and Kildare, and Henry, seventh Duke of Norfolk, the latter from 1684 to 1685. This last tenant is interesting as being the first to reside here of the great family which has been so intimately connected with this spot since.

Lord Feversham appears to have given up the house in 1693, when he was followed in its tenancy by Charles Spencer, second Earl of Sunderland, who had married a daughter of the second Earl of Bristol, and is well known as a trusted friend of both Charles and James. He lived formerly at Leicester House before removing to St. James's Square, and he then continued to reside at St. Albans House till his death in 1702, when he was succeeded in its occupancy by his son, the third Earl, who was once Prime Minister besides having filled a variety of other high administrative posts. The portrait which Richardson has left of this Peer shows us a good-looking man with a somewhat stern expression, and hardly justifies a contemporary writer in describing him as having "a fixed and settled sourness." In 1708, Sunderland, with his wife a daughter of the great Duke of Marlborough, left the house for a residence in Piccadilly, when it was bought (in 1710) by the first Duke of Portland, "the finest person and most accomplished gentleman that ever adorned the British Court," as an address from Jamaica, of which he was Governor, once styled him. He lived here till 1722.

It would appear that the house was very nearly becoming the home of Lord Wentworth, for during his absence abroad his mother was looking about for a home for him, and in a letter, dated November 23, 1708, she writes to him about one she had seen (St. Albans House) in the following terms. I quote the letter entire, as it is a valuable document in that it gives a description of the place at that time; and its orthography is certainly amusing: "My dearest and best of children, I have been to see a very good house in St. James's Square. It has three large rooms forward and two little ones backwars, closetts and marble chimney pieces, and harths to all the best rooms, and iron backs to the chimneys. Thear is twoe prety clossets with chimneys and glas over them, and pictures in the wenscoat over most of the chimneys, bras locks to al the doars, wenscoat at bottom and top, and slips of boards for the hangings. Thear will

want little to be dun to it. Thear is back stairs, twoe coach housis, and stables for ii horses, room over for sarvents, very good offisis, a yard for the drying of cloaths, and leds for that purpus, a stable yeard and a hors pond and back gate, which I forgot the street's name it goes into. Thear is a handsom roome al wenscoated for the steward to dyne in, and another good roome for the other sarvents to dyne in even with the kitchin belowe stairs under the hall and parlors. It was my Lord Sunderland's, it was to little for them. They sold it to a merchant, whoe sent his foolish neaphew whoe could not tell me the prise. It is free ground rent, and al is in herretanc. To-morrow the man coms to tell me the prise." In another letter written three days later, Lady Wentworth continues her account of the advantages of the house, as apparently she had not been shown everything on her first visit; at any rate she says: "The man that showed me the house was a foole, he did not show me al the stables nor coach housis." Thus we find her pointing out that a gallery could be built over the offices, that she is told the house is so strong "it will last for ever," and that she is further assured that "none of the chimneys smoke, and there is the New River Water in all the offesis and great led sesterns in twoe or thre playsis."

Whether it was "the prise" that stood in the way or not, I don't know, but in any case Lord Wentworth eventually settled on another residence in the Square, now No. 5, and, as we have seen, the Duke of Portland came to St. Albans House. Here he made great improvements, building additional reception rooms over the courtyard and garden;¹ but on his being created Governor of Jamaica, he sold the property to the eighth Duke of Norfolk, in 1723, for £10,000. The Duke died on December 23, 1732, and was succeeded in the title, and also the occupancy of the house, by his brother, the ninth Duke who, it will be remembered, lent the mansion, for a period, to Frederick, Prince of Wales, when the latter had his first quarrel with his father in 1737. We are told by Lord Hervey that before, however, the Duke of Norfolk would consent to the Prince having the use of his house, he sent the Duchess to the Queen at Hampton Court, to know whether such an arrangement would be disagreeable to their Majesties, and only on having assurance that it would not, did he let Frederick know that the place was at his disposal.

On June 4, of the following year the Prince who was afterwards to ascend the throne as George III. was born in a room which still exists, in the old building at the back of the present Norfolk House. This particular room Mr. Arthur Dasent considers to date from the Duke of Portland's many improvements, although it has been modernised since

¹ Indeed he seems to have been responsible for the old house as it now appears.

his day. The event took place somewhat unexpectedly, between six and seven o'clock in the morning, the Archbishop of Canterbury being the only great minister of State present. Indeed during the day, the child was so ill that fears were entertained that he would not survive, and at eleven o'clock on the following night, he was privately baptized by the Bishop of Oxford.

The old house is thus the scene not only of the birth, but also of the christening of the King, who loved to lay stress in after life on the fact that he was born a Briton.

A letter in the Wentworth papers gives an account of a ball given, at Norfolk House, by the Prince of Wales, in the January of the following year, which consisted, we are told, "of four couples, first Miss Selwyn and Lord Darnley, Miss Hamilton and Mr. Pit, Miss Windham and Mr. Lyttleton, and two Miss Cooleys with two men . . . the Princess of Wales played at Lottery, the Prince walked about and talked to the Company."

As it was the purpose of both the Prince and Princess of Wales to court popularity in every possible way, and so to draw a sharp distinction between their court and the funereal dulness that reigned at St. James's, and as Frederick was a real lover of music, and indeed no mean performer on the 'cello, we can readily understand that the royal sojourn at Norfolk House was a continued round of gaiety, a gaiety that was not, perhaps, the less pronounced because the royal entourage had been greatly reduced when the Prince came to reside here, or because Lord Carteret did not always get on as well as might have been wished with Lady Archibald Hamilton, or because Pelham, the Prince's secretary, and Cornwallis, one of his equerries, had thought well to withdraw altogether from his household.

It was during this period that the serious illness and subsequent death of Queen Caroline occurred. The Prince sent every day to inquire, for the King had forbidden him to enter the palace, exclaiming that "his poor mother is not in a condition to see him act his false, whining, cringing tricks now"; and, indeed, what sincerity there was in his protestations may be gauged by his remark to every new messenger that arrived with worse news than the last: "Well, sure we shall soon have good news; she cannot hold out much longer." When Frederick removed to Leicester House, the Duke of Norfolk returned to the Square, and resided in the old house till 1747. Soon after his return he commenced negotiations for the purchase of the ground to the north of Norfolk House, with a view to demolishing the house on it, and building on the site, and also on that on which his own house was standing, a more commodious mansion.

This house was then in the possession of Joseph Banks, of Revesby, and was in a very ruinous condition. Before proceeding with the account of this acquisition and the subsequent rebuilding, I must trace, in a brief outline, the history of this dwelling. It stood on the southern portion of that large plot of ground which, on the formation of the Square, had been allocated to Lord Bellasis. The house had first been occupied from 1676 to 1678 by that witty Lady Newburgh who enjoyed the friendship of Charles I., then by Sir John Ernley, once Chancellor of the Exchequer who was followed (in 1684) by Henry Savile, Lord Eland, who lived there for four years, when it came into the possession of William Savile, Lord Eland, afterwards second Marquis of Halifax. After the latter had left it for the large house on the other side of the Square, Gertrude, Marchioness of Halifax, occupied it till 1697, when Charles Berkeley, Lord Dursley, took it in the year he succeeded his father as second Earl of Berkeley. He was a notable man, for besides having acted as Envoy Extraordinary to Madrid in 1687, he was Minister Plenipotentiary at The Hague for six years, and was one of the Lord Justices of Ireland at a later period of his career. Indeed in the year in which he was appointed to this post, he gave up the house in St. James's Square, and was succeeded in its tenancy by Edward Villiers, first Earl of Jersey, who was also once an Ambassador at The Hague as well as at Paris, and held, among other high offices, that of Secretary of State, and Lord Chamberlain, and who married Barbara Chiffinch the daughter of the ubiquitous Will Chiffinch. Later residents here included Sir Edmund Denton; John Talbot, of Longford; Sir James Bateman, once Lord Mayor of London; and Henriette, Countess of Strafford (1718-27) the widow of that Earl of Strafford whose title was restored to him, in 1641, on the execution of his father, the "thorough" Earl. Lady Strafford was the daughter of Frederick Charles, Count of Roze and Ronci, of the great La Rochefoucauld family, and was not the only foreigner who once lived in this house, for later, when Joseph Banks acquired it, it was let for a year (1731) to Count Daggenfelt, the Prussian Minister to the Court of St. James. Banks appears to have again resided here, or at least paid the rates, from 1732-6, when Sir Robert Browne, M.P. for Ilchester, and Paymaster of the Works, took it on a seven years' lease, after which period it was apparently empty, till the negotiations between the Duke of Norfolk and the executors of Mr. Banks who had died in the meanwhile, for the purchase of the freehold, were concluded in 1747.

A private Act of Parliament was passed to provide for the sale; and therein the house is said not to have commanded during recent years a

higher rental than £170, and as the Duke appears to have commenced pulling down St. Albans House, it was surmised that difficulty would be experienced in finding another tenant even at this low rent. The result of the negotiations was that the Duke purchased the site with the old house on it for £1830!

To construct his new mansion, the Duke of Norfolk employed the elder Matthew Brettingham as architect, and the work appears to have occupied four years, the Duke's name being entered in the rate-books for 1752, and the gross estimated value of the new premises being then put at £525. In 1876, it had risen to £2000, and to-day it is no less than £2500.

Mrs. Delany, in her autobiography, has one or two references to the house; and as she states, in 1756, that it was only then just "finished, and opened to the *grand monde* of London," it would appear to have taken several years after its structural completion to render it, in decoration and furnishing, befitting its noble owner's requirements. Mrs. Delany tells Mrs. Dewes, in a letter dated February 14 of this year, that she is asked to a reception there, and adds that she "will then give her friend an account of its magnificence." There is, however, no further notice of this particular occasion in the correspondence, but we are not without a description from an eye-witness, for Horace Walpole, writing to Conway on February 12, thus refers to the entertainment: "The Duchess of Norfolk has opened her new house: all the earth was there last Tuesday. You would have thought there had been a comet, everybody was gazing in the air and treading on one another's toes. In short, you never saw such a scene of magnificence and taste. The tapestry, the embroidered bed, the illumination, the glasses, the lightness and novelty of the ornaments, and the ceilings are delightful. She gives three Tuesdays—would you could be at one! Somebody asked my Lord Rockingham afterwards at White's, what was there? He said, 'Oh! there was all the company afraid of the Duchess, and the Duke afraid of all the company.' It was not a bad picture."

In the following April, there is a short reference to another ball here, "given for the Duke of Cumberland's entertainment," which, together with the supper that followed, is described by Mrs. Delany with her favourite adjective "magnificent." Dancing was kept up till four o'clock in the morning, and to quote our garrulous friend's *ipsissima verba*, "the suppers and the dessert were the prettiest that had ever been seen; the dessert, besides the candles on the table, was lighted by lamps in fine green cut glasses." So full of this great entertainment was the writer that in another letter written a few days later, this time

to Mr. Granville, she again refers to it thus : "The ball at the Duke of Norfolk's was most magnificent and well ordered ; the Duke mightily civil, forbid all ceremony towards him. There were two tables for the dancers, nothing hot but soups. The Duke's supper was hot, two courses and dessert, lighted up with little lamps in green cut glasses. The Duke danced with Lady Coventry, so there was at least one happy woman for three or four hours." As this Lady Coventry was one of the beautiful Gummings whom crowds at the Drawing Rooms stood on chairs to see presented, and who was on one occasion provided by the King with a guard to ward off the too impertinent curiosity of the loungers in the Mall, it is probable that the felicity of the lady was fully shared by her host, although he was then in his seventieth year.¹

The Duke, who continued to reside at Norfolk House for another twenty years after this house-warming—indeed till his death, which occurred in 1777—was born in 1686, so that his life had thus been passed under no less than six sovereigns. His earliest years had echoed with a revolution that drove the last male Stuart from these shores ; his latest were to see one of the brightest gems torn from the Crown, in the loss of America. He appears to have taken no part in the political history of the country, indeed the disabilities so long and foolishly attached to his religion precluded him from doing so, and beyond those important duties connected with his great hereditary office of Earl Marshal, his life was a serene and uneventful one. He was the last of the old male line of the Howard family, and with his death the historic baronies of Mowbray and Howard fell into abeyance. He was succeeded in the ducal title and the estates belonging to the family, by his second cousin Charles, the tenth Duke, who was the first of the six successive Dukes who have resided in Norfolk House. A glance through the records of the family will show that all these holders of the title have played an important part in the social, political and educational annals of the country. To say more would be to go beyond the limits of this work, which deals primarily with the houses of great nobles, and only incidentally with the personalities of their owners ; but when we find the living representative of a family which stretches back to "immemorial antiquity," and has often possessed more than regal power, recognising that such

¹ Walpole mentions another of these entertainments in a letter to George Montagu, dated Jan. 7, 1760, thus : "To night I was asked to their party at Norfolk House. These parties are wonderfully select and dignified ; one might sooner be a knight of Malta than qualified for them. I don't know how the Duchess of Devonshire, Mr. Fox and I were forgiven some of our ancestors. There were two tables at loo, two at whist, and a quadrille. I was commanded to the duke's loo, he was sat down ; not to make him wait I threw my hat upon the marble table, and broke four pieces off a great crystal chandelier."

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records are made more illustrious by individual energy and usefulness to the body politic, even a humble writer may be allowed to note and applaud the fact.

Norfolk House to-day, especially now that a process of cleaning has restored to the front its original appearance, looks very much as it did when fresh from the hands of Brettingham's workmen; the balcony which extends the whole length of the house, and the porch over the entrance, being the only additions made to it since that time.

The interior of the house has a quiet dignity, and is at once imposing and unostentatious. With the Entrance Hall two rooms on either side which look into the Square, communicate; that on the left is used as the Duke's study, that on the right is the Morning Room in which hang a number of pictures conspicuous among them being the quarter-lengths, in one canvas, of Edward Howard, the ninth Duke, and his Duchess, formerly Mary, daughter of Edward Blount, of Blagden, of whom there is also a head hanging above one of the doors. There is also a pair of portraits of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, the great picture collector, and his wife, Lady Alatheia Talbot, daughter of the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury, as well as a number of other pictures of lesser interest, and much beautiful furniture.

From the Morning Room, the great Dining Room, running at right angles with it, is reached. The ceiling of this splendid room is decorated in a gold design on a white ground, and here hangs one of the series of pictures, representing incidents in the life of Joseph, by Guercino, which hang in various apartments; this particular work representing Joseph's coat brought by his brethren to Jacob. There are also a number of oil paintings of Arundel Castle and Park, and over the mantelpiece hangs a portrait of Bernard, the twelfth Duke, who succeeded his cousin Charles the boon companion of the Prince of Wales, in 1815. Two more large rooms on this floor are used as a Bedroom and Dressing Room, and in the latter hangs another of the Guercinos: "His Brethren bringing Gifts to Joseph in Egypt"; while in the ante-room there is the full-length of Henry, the sixth Duke, in his state robes.

The grand staircase, shut off from the Hall by a wall in which two doors give access to it, is extraordinarily fine, the lighting being from a lantern roof, of such an elevation, however, as at first seems to detract from its size, and to render it cramped. On the walls are groups of classical trophies in high relief, and the prevailing note of white is relieved by the gilded capitals of the columns that flank the mural ornaments.

On the first, and as in all eighteenth-century houses, the principal floor, the effect of the rooms is very noble, the ceiling decorations being



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co

THE BLUE DRAWING ROOM, NORFOLK HOUSE.

gilded, and the walls hung in rich brocaded silks. The three most important rooms are the two Drawing Rooms facing the Square and communicating with each other, and the Ball Room, which is immediately above the great Dining Room.

In the first two rooms there are a number of pictures, and the Dutch school is represented by cabinet works, by, amongst others, Cuyp and Molinear and Slingelandt; there are besides portraits of Henrietta Maria, by Vandyck, and the famous one of Thomas, Earl of Arundel, by Holbein whose name is also given to another small portrait more probably by Lucas der Heere. Another of the Guercinos hangs in this room: "Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's Dream"; and an "Abraham and the Angels," was formerly attributed to Murillo, at what time, I suppose that any obviously Spanish painting was conjectured to be from the brush of the then only well-known Spanish painter. In the adjoining Drawing Room there are two more of the Guercino series, viz. "The Cup found in Benjamin's Sack," and "Joseph sold by his Brethren"; while a portrait of Rubens hanging here is assigned to Cornelius Schultz, and that of his wife to the great master himself.

The Ball Room is, in point of elaborate decoration, the most splendid apartment in the house. The whole scheme is carried out in white and gold, and the effect is greatly enhanced by the number of splendid mirrors, each of great size, that hang round the room. The ceiling is wonderfully fine, and the floral designs on the wall, with here and there the ducal coronet displayed, carry out the scheme in a most effective way, and help to give the great room that Oriental appearance which is so characteristic of eighteenth-century decoration.

In some respects, Norfolk House may not be comparable with some of the great London palaces; it does not contain a number of world-renowned pictures as does Bridgewater or Stafford House; its rooms do not equal in size and grandeur those of Dorchester House; it cannot be likened, in architectural beauty, to Chesterfield House; but it is, put in less exacting comparison, a splendid example of an eighteenth-century house, and when to this is added the fact that it has been for a century and a half the town residence of no less than seven Dukes of Norfolk, and during that long period has been the centre of political, social, and ecclesiastical activity, its claim to take its place among the private palaces of London can be sustained with little difficulty.

CHAPTER XVII

PORTMAN HOUSE

THERE have been in the past four Montagu Houses. There was that mansion built by Viscount Montagu, upon the site of the Priory of St. Mary Overey, in Southwark, so long ago as 1545; there was that Montagu House which was the forerunner of the British Museum; there is the Duke of Buccleuch's Montagu House, in Whitehall, and finally there is the Montagu House now known as Portman House, or simply No. 22 Portman Square, which forms the subject of the present chapter, and which takes its name from the famous blue-stocking, and altogether remarkable woman, Mrs. Montagu.

Perhaps hardly another important mansion in London is so closely identified with a single individual as is the great house in Portman Square with its first owner. This is due to two reasons, one of which is the close and almost tender interest taken by Mrs. Montagu in its construction and decoration; and the other the renown of the lady herself. Her life has been more than once written, and quite recently a selection of her letters, more ample than the collection published by Dr. Doran, under the title of *A Lady of the Last Century*, has been given to the world by Mrs. Climençon; so that ample biographical aid to the appreciation of her character is at hand; and indeed, were it not, this work is hardly the place for any minute investigation into her life and attainments; but before saying anything of the house which is so closely connected with Mrs. Montagu's name, I may be allowed to give a brief outline of her life and career.

"La petite Fidget," as the Duchess of Portland used to call her when she was a young girl, was born at York, on October 2, 1720. She was the fourth child and elder daughter of Matthew Robinson and his wife, who had been a Miss Drake of the Drakes of Ash, in Devonshire. The Robinsons were an old and distinguished family, and long possessed that Rokeby Hall, in Yorkshire, until the well-known "Long Sir Thomas Robinson" sold it to Mr. Morritt, of which the world has heard much



Photo Bedford Leivers & Co.

PORTMAN HOUSE, PORTMAN SQUARE.

recently in connection with the famous Velasquez Venus that formerly hung there. It is interesting to know that Sterne married a member of this family, in the person of Elizabeth a step-niece of Matthew Robinson; and therefore, if the reader can bear the strain of linked genealogy long drawn out, the Rev. Laurence was by marriage a step-cousin of Mrs. Montagu.

When Elizabeth Robinson was but seven years of age, her mother inherited from her brother, Morris Drake Morris, he having taken the additional name of Morris, the fine estate of Mount Morris in Kent besides other property; and shortly after this event the family moved to the new possession which, from a print ¹ published in Harris's *History of Kent*, appears to have been a delightful Queen Anne house surrounded by ample grounds.

Before this change of residence took place the family stayed for a time in Cambridgeshire with a relative, the well-known Dr. Conyers Middleton, and it was perhaps to the influence of the author of the *Life of Cicero* that Elizabeth Robinson first imbibed that taste for classical learning which afterwards so greatly distinguished her. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that she already possessed an amount of sharpness of a somewhat precocious nature, for Lord Rokeby, who published some of her early letters, records that "her uncommon sensibility and acuteness of understanding, as well as extraordinary beauty as a child, rendered her an object of great notice in the University," and we are further told that Dr. Middleton (whose personality, by-the-bye, I never can dissociate from that of the learned gentleman of the same name, in *The Egoist*) "was in the habit of requiring from her an account of the learned conversations at which, in his society, she was frequently present."

In 1742, Elizabeth Robinson married Edward Montagu, grandson of the Earl of Sandwich; and from 1750 till 1776 when she built Montagu House, she held a kind of *salon* at her house in Hill Street, Mayfair, where Horace Walpole and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Burke, Garrick, and Lyttelton were to be met with, and where even the ponderous form of Dr. Johnson was occasionally to be seen.

Mrs. Montagu's fame rested not only on her genius for friendship, and a happy ability for surrounding herself with intellectual and interesting people, but also to some extent on her published writings, which if they did not always succeed in pleasing the hypercritical, such as Johnson, who was once very unkind in his remarks on her Essay on Shakespeare, at least placed her among the then limited band of females who rushed into print and lived to find it fame.

¹ Reproduced in Mrs. Climençon's book.

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Associated a good deal in her younger days with Hannah More and Fanny Burney, something of their enthusiasm may have communicated itself to her ever impressionable mind, and the first fruits resulted in the three dialogues, which, in 1760, she contributed to Lord Lyttelton's *Dialogues of the Dead*, published in that year, as well as in the answer she wrote to Voltaire's criticisms on Shakespeare, which appeared in 1769, under the title of *An Essay on the Genius of Shakespeare*. Johnson said that there was nothing noteworthy or original in this performance, and Lady Gower and others were hardly less outspoken; but, however that may be, it helped at least to draw attention to the beauties of the "Bard of Avon," as he was then called, at a time when his name was being assailed by foreign criticism, and when even His Gracious Majesty King George III. could see nothing remarkable in his works; probably preferring Nicholas Rowe or Elkanah Settle! In any case it was not the case of gilding refined gold then, as praise of Shakespeare would be in our own more enlightened day.

When Mrs. Montagu, after the death of her husband who had left her a fortune of £7000 a year, began the building of the great house in Portman Square, she was therefore at the height of her fame. Known to all the literary world of London as a kind of patroness, a great lady whose dilettante amusement it was to put forth her learning in one or two exiguous works, she was also at home among the aristocratic society of the day, which was, perhaps, not averse from stretching, through her, a hand to the humbler, if more amply endowed as to mental qualifications, of those with whom it did not always choose to come into close contact. Her chief friends were, indeed, those who lived on the borderland; Horace Walpole, patrician by birth and instincts, yet morbidly keen to the advantages of brains as well as birth; Sir Joshua, who was equally at home with Johnson and with Beauclerk; Garrick, who, as a player, was intimate with Grub Street, and as a social companion as welcome in St. James's or Mayfair.

Montagu House, as I must for a time continue to call it, although it is now known as Portman House, or simply 22 Portman Square, was designed in 1769 for Mrs. Montagu, by James Stuart,¹ better known as "Athenian" Stuart, from his share with Revett in those *Antiquities of Athens*, which under the ægis of the Society of Dilettanti, did so much to bring classicism in architecture into fashion. But although Stuart had prepared the plans for the house in the year in which George III. came to the throne, it could hardly have been completed for a con-

¹ Miss Gerard (*Life of Angelica Kauffmann*) says it was designed by Bonomi and built by Adam; but Bonomi merely designed some of the rooms, as we shall see.

siderable time after that date.¹ Portman Square itself was not formed till four years later, and although this in itself would be no conclusive testimony that this particular house was not built earlier, the fact that Mrs. Boscawen writes so much later as November 1781, to the effect that "Mrs. Montagu is very busy furnishing her new house," and that "part of her family (in the sense of household) is removed into it,"² seems to indicate that the palace in Portman Square had only recently been completed.³ This is also confirmed by some remarks in a letter from Mrs. Montagu to Mrs. Robinson, dated December 29, 1774, in which she says: "I do not know whether I am more stupid than other people, but I neither find any of the vexation some find in building, nor the great amusement others tell me they experience in it. Indeed, if it were not that a house must be building before it can be built, I should never have been a builder; I have not had a quarter of an hour's pain or pleasure from the operation. I have not met with the least disappointment or mortification. It has gone on as fast and as well as I expected, and, when it is habitable, I shall take great pleasure in it; for it is an excellent house, finely situated, and just such as I have always wish'd, but never hoped, to have." Writing from Bath, on November 21, 1780, she says: "My new house is almost ready. . . . I propose to move all my furniture from Hill Street thither, and let my house unfurnished till a good purchaser appears. Then, should I get a bad tenant, I can seize his goods for rent; and such security becomes necessary in these extravagant times." Again, writing from Hill Street, on the 2nd March, 1781, she says: "I have, greatly to my satisfaction, got my new house finished and fit for habitation; and I should have taken possession at this very time, but the wise people and the medical people say it would be dangerous to go into a new house just after the winter damp"; and she adds: "It is much the fashion to go and see my house, and I receive many compliments upon its elegance and magnificence, but what most recommends it to me is its convenience and cheerfulness."

The house-warming, according to Horace Walpole, took place on February 22, 1782. Says the fastidious master of Strawberry Hill: "I dined with the Harcourts at Mrs. Montagu's new palace, and was much surprised. Instead of vagaries, it is a noble, simple edifice. Magnificent, yet no gilding. It is grand, not tawdry, not larded, embroidered, and *pomponned* with shreds and remnants, and *clinquant* like the harle-

¹ The lease (of ninety-nine years, I suppose) expired in 1874, and therefore must have been granted in 1775; probably plans were prepared earlier, to await the selection of a suitable site.

² Mrs. Delany's *Autobiography*, vol. vi. p. 65.

³ It was probably begun in 1776.

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quinades of Adam, which will never let the eye repose an instant." And well it might be magnificent! Zucchi and Cipriani, Bonomi and Angelica Kauffmann, were all employed in decorating the ceilings and walls, although these artistic additions were added gradually, and Fanny Burney speaks of Angelica Kauffmann as being engaged in painting the Reception Room, in 1781; while Bonomi is known to have executed the designs for the Ball Room ten years later;¹ the ceiling of this apartment was probably painted by Cipriani, as were the six over doors by Angelica.

But whatever was done, was done under the personal supervision of Mrs. Montagu, who seems to have never tired of beautifying her possession, or extolling its merits; and her pleasures of anticipation, as shown by the extracts from her letters just given, appear, as is so rarely the case, to have been more than fulfilled.

Before taking possession her time seems to have been pretty equally divided between superintending the building and decorations of the house, and purchasing objects which would add to its beauty and completeness; thus she buys a large glass at the sale of the French Ambassador's belongings, and other things "pretty cheap," for the further adornment of her "palace"; and she had, perhaps, already in her mind's eye those feather hangings with which she covered the walls of one of the rooms. This, indeed, was her pet "fad"; and in furtherance of her design she begged birds' feathers from all her friends; and where she does not see well to openly demand these offerings of friendship, she pretty openly hints at what she wants—and gets it. Thus on one occasion, February 3, 1784, she writes to Mrs. Robinson: "My great piece of feather work is not yet completed; so, if you have an opportunity of getting me any feathers, they will be very acceptable. The brown tails of partridges are very useful, tho' not so brilliant as some others"; on another, she remarks that "the feathers of a goose may be better adapted to some occasions than the plumes of the phoenix," which might very well be the case; and once at least she cast covetous eyes on the tails of a friend's peacocks; but when she could get nothing better she was content with the produce of the farmyard, sententiously remarking that "things homely and vulgar are sometimes more useful than the elegant"; from which we see that with a knowledge of human nature, she possessed an accommodating taste and perhaps no little sense of humour. Her hobby was not only furthered by the generosity of her friends, who must have despoiled many a feathered innocent to add to her collection; but was also celebrated by a poet! Not a

¹ The drawing for this, as well as for a room he designed at Lansdowne House, is mentioned in Leslie and Taylor's *Life of Reynolds*, vol. ii. p. 572.

second-rate bard like Stephen Duck, who wrote bad verses on Queen Caroline's grottoes and temples in Richmond Gardens, but a great poet ; no other than William Cowper, who from his rural Olney sent, in 1788, a poem on the subject, of which the first twenty lines ran thus :—

“ The birds put off their every hue
To dress a room for Montagu ;
The peacock sends his heavenly dyes,
His rainbows and his starry eyes ;
The pheasant, plumes which round enfold
His mantling neck with downy gold,
The cock his arch'd tail's azure shows,
And, river blanch'd, the swan his snow ;
All tribes besides of Indian name,
That glossy shine, or vivid flame,
Where rises and where sets the day,
Whate'er they boast of rich and gay,
Contribute to the gorgeous plan,
Proud to advance it all they can.
This plumage neither dashing shower
Nor blasts that shake the dripping bower,
Shall drench again or discompose,
But screened from every storm that blows,
It boasts a splendour ever new
Safe with protecting Montagu.”

But the immortality predicated of these hangings, by a poetical licence, was unfortunately not to be attained, and though they were safe enough from “ blasts that shake the dripping bower,” they were not proof against the ravages of the insistent moth, which, indeed, after a time made such inroads into the Tyrian hues of the peacock, not less than into the “ brown tails of partridges ” or the feathers of the goose, that the walls had to be stripped in favour of a more durable, if possibly a less original covering.

Besides this feathered nest, Mrs. Montagu transformed her dressing room into what she called her “ Room of Cupidons,” painted with flowers and cupids, which at least one of her friends thought anything but appropriate, and we find Mrs. Delany wondering “ how such a genius, at her age, and so circumstanced could think of painting the walls of her dressing room with bowers of roses and jessamine, entirely inhabited by little cupids in all their wanton ways ” !

The fact is the house was a veritable plaything ; and from the moment she took possession of it, till the end of her life, Mrs. Montagu seems never to have grown tired of adding to its decorations, or improving it

in other ways. There is no doubt, too, that she surrounded herself here with a court, the members of which, for the most part, found that everything she said was brilliant and everything she did in perfect taste ; and if there were grumblers like Johnson, fastidious critics like Walpole, or outspoken friends like Mrs. Delany, or even satirists like Cumberland who in 1785 published his essay on the assemblies here, which he called *Feasts of Reason*, presided over by Vanessa, as he termed Mrs. Montagu, it is probable that the mistress of the palace in Portman Square heard little or nothing of the adverse criticism passed on some of her hobbies.

Mrs. Montagu's fame does not rest so much on her literary ability or even her somewhat remarkable intellect, as on the fact that she possessed both the means and the inclination to gather round her the most intellectual society of the day ; and she thus takes her place, a foremost one, among those who have attempted to emulate the *salons* of France in a less congenial atmosphere. And with the literary and artistic she combined the fashionable and the noble. She had indeed a genius for friendship ; and it is probable that even those who occasionally laughed at her fads or found fault with her taste, were ready enough to acknowledge the charm of her manner and her innate kindness of heart. During two successive years she invited the members of the Literary Club to dine at her house ; "curiosity," says Sir John Hawkins, "was her motive, and possibly a desire of intermingling with our conversation the charm of her own."

An interesting list might indeed have been compiled from her card-basket, for few of the great ones of this period whose names we now remember, would have been absent. George III. and Queen Charlotte were both entertained here ; Dr. Johnson allowed, somewhat grudgingly, it must be confessed, that he did not remember "to have passed many evenings with fewer objections" than in Portman Square, but although the company was splendid and the great man had been made much of, he would not allow that he was "gratified" ; Garrick's vivacity enlivened the great assemblies here ; and here might have been seen the famous ear-trumpet of Sir Joshua. Indeed Mrs. Montagu was sufficiently great to be able to choose her friends, and although half the illustrious ones of the peerage were to be met with in her rooms, those rooms resounded as often to the names of men who have become illustrious by their own genius, but whom contemporary society is not always anxious to take to its arms. Actors we can nowadays readily understand being made much of, but that mere authors should have been equally welcome, strikes us as very advanced. Yet Young, of the *Night Thoughts*, and Beattie of *Minstrel* fame, and Gilbert West, were all friends of the great

lady, as were, of course, such men as Burke and Lord Chatham, Lord Kaimes and Bishop Stillingfleet, Horace Walpole and Pultney, the anecdotic Seward, and Lord Lyttelton, whose "ghost story" has outlived his poetry.

Few rooms in London have echoed to the voices or the laughter of so many fashionable and notable people as have those of Montagu House, for besides the more heterogeneous assemblies that were so often received here, the famous "Blue-stocking" Club also met in these rooms. Mrs. Vesey and Mrs. Boscowen, Mrs. Carter who translated Epictetus, and Mrs. Chapone the friend of Dr. Johnson, were the more prominent members of this "charming poetic familiarity," of which Hannah More has told us that in it learning was not disfigured by pedantry, nor good taste tintured by affectation.

Sir Nathaniel Wraxall thus speaks of the "Blue-stockings" and Mrs. Montagu's connection with them; the extract is rather a lengthy one, but as it embraces some details of, as well as further illustrates, the character of Mrs. Montagu, I give it practically in its entirety:—"The *Gens de Lettres*, or 'Blue-stockings,' as they were commonly termed, formed a very numerous, powerful, and compact phalanx in the midst of London. Into this society, the two publications which I had recently given to the world—one, on the Northern Kingdoms of Europe; the other, on the History of France, under the Race of Valois—however destitute of merit, yet facilitated and procured my admission. Mrs. Montagu was then the Madame du Deffand of the English capital; and her house constituted the central point of union for all those persons who already were known, or who emulated to become known, by their talents and productions. Her supremacy, unlike that of Madame du Deffand, was, indeed, established on more solid foundations than those of intellect, and rested on more tangible material than any with which Shakespeare himself could furnish her. Though she had not as yet begun to construct the splendid mansion in which she afterwards resided, near Portman Square, she lived in a very elegant house in Hill Street. Impressed probably from the suggestions of her own knowledge of the world, with a deep conviction of that great truth laid down by Molière, which no man of letters ever disputed, that *Le vrai Amphitrion est celui chez qui l'on dîne*, Mrs. Montagu was accustomed to open her house to a large company of both sexes, whom she frequently entertained at dinner. A service of plate, and a table plentifully covered, disposed her guests to admire the splendour of her fortune, not less than the lustre of her talents. Mrs. Montagu, in 1776, verged towards her sixtieth year; but her person, which was thin, spare, and in good preservation, gave her an

appearance of less antiquity. From the infirmities often attendant on advanced life she seemed to be almost wholly exempt. All the lines of her countenance bespoke intelligence, and her eyes were accommodated to her cast of features, which had in them something satirical and severe, rather than amiable or inviting. She possessed great natural cheerfulness and a flow of animal spirits; loved to talk, and talked well on almost every subject; led the conversation, and was qualified to preside in her circle, whatever subject of discourse was started; but her manner was more dictatorial and sententious than conciliating or diffident. There was nothing feminine about her; and though her opinions were usually just, as well as delivered in language suited to give them force, yet the organ which conveyed them was not musical. Destitute of taste in disposing of ornaments of her dress, she nevertheless studied or affected those aids, more than would seem to have become a woman professing a philosophic mind, intent upon higher pursuits than the toilet. Even when approaching to fourscore, this female weakness still accompanied her; nor could she relinquish her diamond necklace and bows which formed of evenings the perpetual ornament of her emaciated person. I used to think that these glittering appendages of opulence sometimes helped to dazzle the disputants, whom her arguments might not always convince, or her literary reputation intimidate.”¹

This is, in truth, not an altogether flattering picture, but there was a good deal beneath the bows and the diamond necklace which Wraxall did not see; and it is absurd to suppose that if their hostess was a merely over-dressed, loud-talking, not very convincing person, as seems here suggested, that even her wealth would have enabled her to surround herself with the brightest intellects of the day; the Duchess of Portland, an old friend, and the beautiful Georgiana of Devonshire, and even the miserly old Lord Bath might have come, but surely not the Abbé Raynal, and Dr. Monsey of Chelsea College; Mrs. Siddons and Edmund Burke; nor can we suppose the burly Doctor himself prepared to be sacrificed even to glittering gems unless their wearer could do some feeble parrying to his heavy thrusts.

Fanny Burney was a frequent visitor at Montagu House, and describes the hostess as “brilliant in diamonds, solid in judgment, critical in talk; sometimes flashy, and an immense talker; but still eminently courteous and agreeable”; but Fanny was not always quite so just, I think, to Mrs. Montagu; and certainly Mrs. Thrale was also unsympathetic, which perhaps arose from the fact that her vanity could, like the Turk, allow no one near the throne; or perhaps she never forgot the unfortunate

¹ *Historical Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 137-9.

occasion on which she was invited to Montagu House to meet the Bishop of Chester, when "the Bishop waited for Mrs. Thrale to begin speaking, and Mrs. Thrale waited for the Bishop, and Mrs. Montagu harangued away, caring not one fig who spoke so long as she could herself be listened to."¹

It is hardly remarkable if one who, like Mrs. Montagu, gathered so many diverse elements about her, should have been adversely criticised by some of them; the curious thing is that, placing, as she did, so many under an obligation to her, so many loved her and spoke well of her. Whatever were her shortcomings—her love of patronage, of hearing herself talk, of displaying the gifts the gods had given her, of showing off her worldly possessions, there is little doubt but that literature owed her a heavy debt, for it was she who first had the courage to bring its professors into the fashionable society of the day; and if she borrowed the idea from the more liberal notions obtaining on the Continent, she was at least the pioneer of the *salon* in this country, for she was practically the only great lady who succeeded in attracting the *habitués* of clubs and the fair sex from their cards to meet together to converse with those whose proper sphere had hitherto been considered to be Grub Street and Fleet Street. I say she was the first to do this; she was, too, practically the last, for she had no proper successor; and if she stands alone in her welcome admixture of two rather antipathetic elements, so does her splendid home remain as the one spot where was undertaken with success what no one hitherto had dreamed of attempting and no one since has succeeded in accomplishing.

But if Montagu House is notable for this, it is, too, interesting as being the annual scene of gatherings of a very different complexion; for here, on May Day in every year, Mrs. Montagu was accustomed to give a feast to all the chimney sweeps in London. In those days, this vocation was not only a dirty, but frequently for its younger members, a dangerous, calling. Terrible anecdotes have come down to us confirming this, and Charles Lamb has, as all the world knows, crystallised some of the terrifying circumstances connected with the business in a well-known essay. Whether Mrs. Montagu's kind heart had been affected by some such tales, or whether, as is said, a young member of the Montagu² family had been kidnapped by a sweep, and miraculously restored to his family, and the annual festivity was a sort of thank-offering for his return; certain it is that she determined that the fraternity

¹ *Queens of Society*, vol. ii. p. 284.

² Edward Wortley Montagu, son of Lady Mary, and Edward Wortley Montagu. An interesting account of his adventures is given in Timbs' *Romance of London*.

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should have, at least, one joyful day in the year, and by a lavish provision of beef and plum-pudding, and the run of the fine garden attached to Montagu House, she effected this, and the "Sweeps' Holiday" became an almost national institution for many years.

Mrs. Montagu, even after she had ceased to leave her house, received her hosts of friends here, till within two years of her death. She had, to use Dr. Burney's words, at last become "almost wholly blind and very feeble," and the once brilliant leader of fashion was at length cut off from that society which she had for so long enjoyed and petted. She died in August, 1800; had she survived till the following October she would have been exactly eighty years of age.

After her death Montagu House became the property of her nephew, Matthew Montagu,¹ who had taken the latter name in place of his original patronymic of Robinson, and who was heir to her property. He, however, apparently let the place, for after Mrs. Montagu's death the house was occupied by the Turkish Ambassador, who erected in the garden a "kiosk," where, surrounded by his suite, he was wont to smoke his pipe and dream of the Bosphorus.

A member of the Montagu family, who was raised to the peerage as Lord Rokeby, was occupying the house in 1835, and in that year his son-in-law, the Right Hon. Henry Goulburn, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Duke of Wellington's and Sir Robert Peel's Administrations of 1828-30, and 1841-6, respectively, and Home Secretary from 1834-5, was also residing here.

The mansion remained in the hands of the Montagu family till 1874, when the lease expired, and the ground landlord, the first Viscount Portman, came to live in it; since when it has been the town house of the Portman family. The first Lord Portman made various additions to the house, such as recasing it, and adding the portico which, unlike such additions as a rule, has the appearance of being a component portion of the original structure.

To-day, apart from the natural changes which different tastes and modes of life engender, the interior of Portman House, as it is now called, preserves many of the characteristics of the time when Mrs. Montagu lived in it, and surrounded herself with the interesting and fashionable people of the later Georgian era.

The Entrance Hall, with its Corinthian columns, is little altered, and

¹ When in Parliament he was always being confused with General Montagu Matthew; when the latter remarked on one occasion, "that there was no more likeness between Montagu Matthew and Matthew Montagu, than between a chestnut horse and a horse chestnut."—Wraxall.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE SALOON, PORTMAN HOUSE.

the great top-light to the well-staircase looks down now on those ascending the stairs as it did on the crowd of well-known people who passed up them to pay their respects to the former famous mistress of the house. The Morning Room, however, although its beautiful painted ceiling and its elaborate decorations in white and gold preserves the taste of the period when it was constructed, no longer bears on its walls those feathered hangings which have been before referred to ; but its fine marble mantelpiece and polished steel grate, the latter a characteristic to be found in all the principal apartments, are as they were in Mrs. Montagu's time. From this room the Boudoir is reached, which in turn communicates with the principal bedroom. The Boudoir was originally Mrs. Montagu's "Room of Cupidons" ; but to-day these decorations have disappeared, and the prevailing tone of the room, carried out in the silk hangings on the walls and in other ways, is, not inappropriately, considering its former uses, blue. In this apartment, which is relatively small, is one of the fine marble mantelpieces which are to be found throughout the house, and of which the most elaborate example is that in the principal bedroom in which wreaths of flowers and fruit in coloured marbles are inlaid in white carrara in the most effective manner, and so skilfully that the effect of painted marble is produced.

The principal room on this floor is the Ball Room, which is extraordinarily fine both in proportion and decoration. The ceiling, which is arched, is painted in panels, and the mass of gilding which surrounds these patches of delicate colour enhances their beauty, and communicates an air of great richness to the whole. The marble mantelpiece is also painted, and with the green marble columns with their gilt bases and capitals at one end of the room, carries out the classical scheme in the most effective way. Bonomi was responsible for most of the decorations of this room, and the paintings on the ceilings representing Olympus, with, among other subjects, "Venus borrowing the Cestus of Juno," in the centre compartment, are said to have been executed by him in 1791 ; although I think it more probable that the actual colouring was the work of Cipriani, as Bonomi was merely a designer and not a colourist.

There is in this room a characteristic I do not remember ever to have seen in any other ; the frames of the window recesses and of the doors are all of solid white marble, and would seem calculated to defy even Time's destroying hand.

The Reception Room is decorated if anything more elaborately than the other apartments, and here evidence of the work of Angelica Kauffmann is particularly observable, six pictures, originally intended as decorations for over-doors, being from her brush. The subjects are

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taken from Shakespeare's plays, and one of them, that of Cordelia's dead body on the bier, is of great merit, and far superior to the rest ; although it is really unfair to judge these works as pictures at all, when they are merely intended as mural decorations. Unfortunately, however, they have been framed, which undoubtedly weakens the effect they were meant to produce, and which they would still produce if placed over the doors or let into the walls.

Two other rooms on this floor are the Blue Drawing Room, so called from the colour of its brocaded silk wall hangings, and the Drawing Room, in which the prevailing tint is of pale green. In these, as in the other rooms I have mentioned, there are a number of beautiful objects scattered about on all sides ; but very few pictures ; considering, however, the highly decorative nature of the ceilings, the over-doors as well as even the frames of the doors, this *lacuna* is not so much to be deplored ; indeed it is a question whether pictorial decorations would not suffer by juxtaposition with so much elaborate work as is here to be found as an intrinsic part of the house itself. This point has probably been duly considered, for in the Dining Room, which is necessarily less splendidly embellished than the other apartments, a number of pictures, chiefly of the modern school, hang. This apartment is on the ground floor, and looks out on to the beautiful garden, which will, for many people, constitute one of the chief attractions of this fine mansion. The garden, together with the ground on which the house and the stables stand, extends to some three acres ; and when its central position in London is considered, the significance of this will be realised.

The prevailing note of Portman House is one of artistic dignity, by which I would be understood to indicate dignity that has been increased by the care formerly bestowed upon it, and the preservation of its original characteristics. Some great houses are dignified but are anything but artistic ; others have been so over-elaborated in detail as to lose all repose, and tire the eye by the very effort made to please it. Portman House seems to me to hit the happy mean ; its dignified appearance is just sufficiently lightened by the beauty and unity of its internal decorations ; and these decorations never become "*fade et rebutant*," as Boileau phrases it, by being tortured into means for displaying vulgar ostentation ; the mansion also remains a remarkable evidence of the art appreciation of the period in which it was built and adorned ; a period which was to be, for many years, the last of any true appreciation of art at all in this country.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

SPENCER HOUSE (WEST FRONT).

CHAPTER XVIII

SPENCER HOUSE

THREE of London's most stately houses cluster together at the south-east corner of the Green Park, and overlook the spot which in Carolean and early Georgian days was a noted duelling place, but now only responds to the tread of peaceful citizens, and hears no more terrible sounds than the crying of gregarious children or the strains of intermittent music.

Of these three palaces—Stafford House, Bridgewater House, and Spencer House—the last is the smallest, but in many respects not the least interesting, and certainly the most picturesque. The entrance to it is by St. James's Place, one of those small *cul-de-sacs* from St. James's Street that have preserved some of the characteristics of an earlier day which the great thoroughfare out of which they lead has almost entirely lost. St. James's Place is so full of memories, that a few words must be said about it before we enter the mansion which is its most important feature.

Addison once lodged in its precincts, and here were held those symposia in which the author of *The Campaign* was so frequently joined by Steele and Davenant, Carey and Phillips; Mr. Secretary Craggs and Admiral Churchill, the great Marlborough's brother, and Pope's friends Parnell and Cleland, were former residents, as was "sweet Molly Lepel," who married Lord Hervey, and who resided in a house built for her in 1747, but was subsequently divided into two residences. John Wilkes was staying here "in elegant lodgings," some ten years later; and later still Charles James Fox might have been seen treading its stones to one of his many resting-places in this neighbourhood, or visiting "Perdita" Robinson who was once living at No. 13.

"At her house in St. James's Place," died dear old Mrs. Delany in 1788; Sir Francis Burdett lived for a time, after he had left his house in Piccadilly, and died in 1844, in a house here (No. 25) which had been originally erected for Lord Guildford; but of all the notable people, and there are others besides those I have set down, who once resided in St. James's Place, none has left such an undying mark here as Samuel

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Rogers, who for over fifty years lived at No. 22, where all that was best in the literary and fashionable society of the day was wont to foregather. One cannot take up a book of reminiscences or a diary for the first half of the nineteenth century without coming across innumerable references to this house and its fastidious owner; and here, as Hayward has written, "surrounded by the choicest treasures of art, and in a light reflected from Guidos and Titians, have sat and mingled in familiar converse the most eminent poets, painters, actors, artists, critics, travellers, historians, warriors, orators, and statesmen of two generations."¹ Such are the interesting memories which cling around St. James's Place, and help to give an added distinction to the spot where Spencer House, itself a classic masterpiece, stands.

The mansion owes its existence to John Spencer, son of the third Earl of Sunderland, who was created first Earl Spencer in 1765. Copley's portrait represents him as having an intelligent, eager face, with a pronounced aquiline nose that somewhat recalls that of the elder Pitt. It is interesting to know that he was one of those nobles who took upon themselves the duties of mayoral office at a time when it was not so customary as it has since become, to find the great ones of the earth interesting themselves in municipal matters. He was Mayor of St. Albans in 1779, having been High Steward of the borough seven years earlier.

Lord Spencer's interest in art is proved by his having been one of the early members of the famous Society of Dilettanti, which did so much to improve the architecture of the country, and initiated, in fact, the first systematic attempt to bring England into line with the more artistic countries of Europe in this respect. Indeed Spencer House is so obviously the outcome of the movement of which the Society of Dilettanti was the moving spirit, that a few remarks about this generally little known institution will, perhaps, be interesting in this connection, especially as the architectural features of several of the other great houses mentioned in these pages were the result of the same influence.

What William Wilkins, the architect, once wrote to Lord Goderich with regard to the example set by the Society might well be taken as its permanent motto: "The Society of Dilettanti," he says, "has done more towards the acquisition of architectural knowledge, by the promulgation of publications on the antiquities of Greece and Asia Minor, and by other aid afforded to the professors of architecture, than all the governments and societies of England united."

The Society was formed in 1734, by certain gentlemen who had travelled in Italy, and were anxious to encourage a taste in England for

¹ *Selected Essays*, vol. i. p. 74.

those objects which had fascinated them during their wanderings, as well as to promote a friendly and convivial spirit among those whose tastes lay in the same direction. Some four years later certain of its more enterprising members, among them the young Earl of Sandwich and Mr. Ponsonby afterwards Lord Bessborough, made a voyage round the eastern parts of the Mediterranean, visiting Greece and Turkey, Asia Minor and Egypt, thus giving a fresh impulse to the new movement which bore fruit in the liberal contributions made by the Society towards the investigations of later travellers, and the publications of the results of their researches.

In 1749, it was determined to form an Academy of Arts, and ground was actually purchased in Cavendish Square for that purpose; the site, however, not being afterwards made use of, was sold at such a substantial profit that it placed the Society in command of a very considerable sum towards those lavish contributions which it made to the splendid publications of men like Stuart and Revett, Dr. Chandler, and Sir William Gell.

Stuart and Revett had been introduced to the Society by Sir James Grey, the British Minister at Venice, whose brother, Colonel George Grey, was one of the most active of the members who personally interested themselves in their ventures and discoveries. During their travels they had visited the Temple of Pola, and, in 1753, the Society determined that this should be the model for their intended home of British Art, but at this moment the movement was on hand which resulted in the founding of the Royal Academy, and although the Society of Dilettanti thereupon refrained from doing anything on its own initiative, it largely contributed to the success of the new venture which greatly relied for success on the aid and countenance of the elder body.

In 1774, we find the Society setting aside the interest of a large sum of money in order that two students, recommended by the Royal Academy, might study for three years in Greece and Italy; it also undertook the heavy expenses connected with Dr. Chandler's mission of investigation in Italy, and the purchase of many of the marbles and inscriptions found by him, as well as the subsequent publication of his two quarto volumes. In 1812, the members sent out another mission under Sir William Gell, and published, at their own expense, his magnificent volumes on the antiquities of Attica, and later those on Ionian antiquities.

At an earlier date the Society had begun to interest itself in the badly needed new bridge at Westminster, and it was probably due to its exertions that Parliament was induced to take the expense of this fine work on its own shoulders.

An interesting feature in the constitution of the Society was the employment of a painter—Knapton was the first, followed by Sir Joshua

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and others—to perpetuate the lineaments of its members; those who did not at once have their portraits thus taken having to pay “face money,” *i.e.* a guinea a year till they did. The portraits are to-day in the Dudley Gallery, and here may be seen the heads of those who did so much to encourage art at a time when such an impetus was badly needed. There are the two great groups painted by Reynolds; the portraits of Lord Le Despencer, of Medenham Abbey notoriety, the Dukes of Bedford, Dorset, and Kingston; Lords Holderness, Granby, Duncannon, Sandwich, and Middlesex; Mr. Morritt, of Rokeby Hall; General Grey; the Colonel Edward Grey whom I have mentioned, and to whom, as we shall see, Spencer House is said to owe much of its architectural beauty; Payne Knight, one of whose publications nearly brought the Society into some temporary discredit, and Sir Martin Shee, who, in his day, was one of its “painters,” as Lord Leighton and Sir John Millais were in our own time.

One can imagine that when the plans of Spencer House were completed, they were probably laid before the Society for its consideration; for at least two who were concerned in its erection, Colonel Grey and “Athenian” Stuart, were as we have seen, active members of that body. Spencer House is, indeed, an excellent object lesson in the aims of this Society, for it combines in its architecture and decorations evidence of that classic revival which, perhaps, alone prevented a more general acceptance of that sham-gothic style which Walpole inaugurated and did so much to popularise.

The mansion was the product of the combined energies of several architects, at least four having had a hand in the work; Colonel George Grey, an amateur architect—of whom, by-the-bye, there were a great number at this period—being said to have executed the general design of the house;¹ which would not be incompatible with the assertion that has been made that the design was taken from a drawing by Inigo Jones; for it is quite likely that an amateur would be willing enough to base his production on the work of such a pre-eminent master. On the other hand, it has been rather generally stated that John Vardy, a pupil of Kent, was the architect of the main portion of the house. Vardy, with the help of Bonomi, was, we know, some twenty years later responsible for Uxbridge House in Burlington Gardens, and was, a little earlier than the period of the building of Spencer House, employed in erecting the Horse Guards, the chief design of which had been produced by his master, Kent, and as there are certain points of, it must be confessed somewhat remote, resemblance between that building and Spencer House,

¹ Cust's *History of the Society of Dilettanti*, p. 12.

his claim to the design of at least the Green Park front of the latter may perhaps be allowed. The very noticeable statues which decorate this front were the work of a little-known sculptor named Spang, and are, considering the somewhat questionable propriety of such figures as adornments to a private residence, not unsuccessful. The façade facing St. James's Place was the work of James, or, as he is more generally termed, "Athenian," Stuart.¹

The mansion was apparently commenced about the end of 1755 or beginning of 1756, for we find Mrs. Delany writing on September 27 of the latter year, thus : "Tuesday morning Dr. Delany and I walked through the Park to see Mr. Spencer's house, which is begun, and the ground floor finished. One front is in St. James's Place, on the left hand as you go up the street, and another front to the Green Park ; it will be superb when finished." The completion did not, however, take place for some years, as Stuart's front, and certain of the elaborate internal decorations were not designed till some four years later.

As we see it to-day Spencer House is one of the most complete and elaborate examples of the architecture and decorations of that transition which, as we have seen, the Dilettanti did so much to foster by a lavish expenditure and untiring energy in preserving and bringing into this country those remains of ancient Greece and Rome which might otherwise have fallen victims not so much to the destroying hand of Time as to the vandalism of those who should have been their natural protectors.

In all the Reception Rooms, both on the ground and first floors, the splendid mantelpieces are eloquent of classic associations ; that in the large Drawing Room being particularly noticeable. In like manner the ceilings are things to wonder at, the most beautiful being that in the Ball Room, divided into compartments heavily gilded, and the frieze of which is decorated with medallions in the most effective manner ; indeed the friezes, the *sopra-portas*, the solid mahogany doors, and every detail of the internal decoration carry out the *motif* dominating the whole house in a remarkably complete way.

The Grand Staircase, of great height, has a vaulted ceiling in compartments, the details of which are accentuated by the skilful arrangements of lighting, which, although it may be an anachronism, is after all a necessary one. But this is a house in which everything pertaining to a

¹ Elmes, in his *British Artists*, speaking of "this magnificent mansion," says : "I have heard it asserted that the shell of Spencer House, consisting of solid stone, cost alone 50,000 guineas ;" and Mr. Blomfield, in his *History of Renaissance Architecture in England*, gives a technical account of the building, and notices the remarkable ability displayed in the internal arrangements which, he says, are "more modern than any plan of the time." The plan and elevation of the house are in the *Vitruvius Britannicus*.

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later life than that of early Greece or Rome appears an anachronism; such a place which, to be properly appreciated, should be treated as Sir Alma Tadema has treated his classic abode, or Mr. Mortimer Menpes, his oriental resting-place; and particularly is this the case with one remarkable room, a veritable *tour de force* of reconstructive ability. This is the so-called Painted Room; and appropriately so-called, for there is hardly a square inch on wall or ceiling which has not been decorated in those dead colours which the remains of Pompeii or Herculaneum yield to our gaze. When we enter this apartment we seem to be stepping back two thousand years; we are no longer in a London reception-room; we are in the *tablinum* in the house of Marcus Lucretius, or in one of the remarkable painted chambers in the dwelling of Meleager; that red light in the sky is not the sun setting over the trees of the Green Park, but the afterglow of some great eruption of Vesuvius! If a door open, surely Glaucus or Diomed or the blind Nydia will appear! It is truly a room in which to dream of the past, a living past made sentient by the realistic surroundings in which we stand; and we are only brought down to the eighteenth century by seeing the beautiful creations of the French art of that period which fill it, or to the actual present, by catching a glimpse of the band-stand in the Park beyond.

Descriptions of rooms are always unsatisfactory, and at best give but an inadequate idea of what one wishes to convey; but with the help of the illustration here given, some idea may be gained of the extraordinarily complete decorative scheme of this remarkable apartment. It will be seen that the ceiling is divided into compartments very deeply moulded, the centres of which are occupied by paintings of dancing girls and allegorical figures, and that from its centre hangs a beautiful but startling anachronism in the shape of a crystal chandelier above which, in a circle, are painted the signs of the Zodiac. The walls are also divided into compartments by flat columns surmounted by elaborate capitals; while in the intervening spaces, circular, oval, and oblong paintings, probably the work of Zucchi¹ or Angelica Kauffmann, representing allegorical subjects, are surrounded by festoons, wreaths, and an abundance of arabesques, almost bewildering in their fantastic ingenuity of disposition. But what cannot be seen in the illustration, is the gorgeous

¹ Antonio Zucchi, whom I have occasion to mention several times in this work, was born in Italy, and was brought to this country by Adam, by whom he was employed in decorating many of the houses which the latter erected. He became an associate of the Royal Academy, but subsequently returned to Rome where he died in 1795. Angelica Kauffmann is too well known to require any further notice here; an interesting life of this talented lady was written by F. A. Gerard (1892), where her friendship with Lord and Lady Spencer, and the commissions given her by them, are mentioned.



Photo Bedford Lemere & Co

THE PAINTED ROOM, SPENCER HOUSE.

effect of colour which, when we consider the number of tones introduced, makes the result produced a veritable *tour de force*. The whole of the room is delicately painted in a blue-green background, against which the elaborate gilding introduced in the capitals of the columns and elsewhere, stands out with added splendour and effect. The picture includes that portion of the room which has a rounded end, and is divided from the rest by pillars of ivory white and gold, which forms an appropriate feature in the scheme of decoration; and if the anomaly of a fire-place can be permitted, the beauty of the marble chimney-piece, with its painted panel above representing a Roman wedding, its terra-cotta *bas reliefs*, and its finely moulded caryatids, must surely extort praise from the most fastidious and the most critical.

Besides this wonderful room, there is a delightful little Tribune with a domed ceiling and concave walls beautifully decorated with classic designs in dead white. This small apartment leads from a larger one, now used as a Library, and was intended, I assume, as a way on to the great Terrace which runs the whole length of the house, and overlooks the Green Park. This Terrace, of great width, is one of the features of the mansion, and, with the exception of the more modern one at Montagu House, Whitehall, is unique as an adjunct to a London residence. Between it and the Park is the garden, which occupies Crown land and for which a great rent is paid.

Spencer House has been for some years occupied by Baron de Forest who rents it from Lord Spencer, and although much of the fine furniture and a few of the pictures belong to his Lordship, the chief objects are the property of the Baron. In these circumstances it is not exactly within my scheme to speak of them, because at the expiration of his tenancy they will be removed, but I cannot resist, as I have the permission, to say a word or two about some of the wonderful things which have their temporary home there. For instance, in the small Drawing Room hangs a lovely portrait of Henrietta Maria by Vandyck, and a three-quarter-length of a young boy by the same master. Here too, is a particularly interesting picture of the unfortunate Dauphin (Louis XVII.), by Greuze, holding in his hand a ball—the only toy, it is said, allowed him during those dreary days of imprisonment in the Temple; and a landscape, one of the Swiss lakes, by Turner, as well as a Cuypp full of verve and rich colour; but the glory of the room's contents are the two landscapes by Hobbema, before which one could spend hours of delighted contemplation, so rich and fresh are these two masterpieces.

Then in the large Drawing Room hangs a Terburg, representing a

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man writing while another waits to carry away the letter ; and a Jan Steen, full of richness and breadth ; another picture by the same Dutch Hogarth is in the Dining Room, and is called "St. Nicholas's Day," in which work the figures are much larger than is usual with this painter, and the humour is as infectious as is that of the boy playing on the flute, by Franz Hals, which hangs near it. In the Dining Room is a fine "Holy Family" by Murillo, which hangs at one end of the room, while at the other is Vandyck's masterly canvas portraying the Duchess of Buckingham and her three children, painted after the death of the Duke whose portrait is, however, introduced as a medallion attached to a column in the background.

Those who are interested in the French furniture of the eighteenth century may here, too, feast their eyes on that pair of *armoires* which were originally at Hamilton Palace, and which probably remain among the greatest masterpieces of Boulle's skill. They were designed by Le Brun, and are made of ebony inlaid with ormolu, with panels of tortoise-shell ; but the whole description may be read in the Catalogue of the famous Hamilton Palace collection, at the sale of which they realised over £12,000. They had originally been in the Louvre, in the Duc Dumont's collection, and later at Fonthill, a pedigree alone sufficient to stamp them as masterpieces of French decorative art.

There are not many books to be seen in Spencer House to-day, and the wonderful library collected by the bibliophilic second Earl, is no longer at Althorp, having been purchased *en bloc* by the late Mrs. Rylands and presented to the city of Manchester, but at one time many of these treasures had a resting-place, if but a temporary one, here.

Dr. Dibdin has described them, with all the minuteness of a lover, in his great work on the Spencer Library, in which may be read the history of the acquisition of such an assemblage of books as has never, perhaps, been equalled by any private collector. What book-lover cannot appreciate the feelings of the noble collector when he brought back to Spencer House one of those fifty-seven Caxtons, or the great Mentz Psalter, or the Mazarin Bible, or some example of the presses of Wynken de Worde, Pynsen, or Fust and Schoeffer ; or of the Aldines (there are no less than six hundred of them), or the Elzevirs, including that rarity, the *Pastissier François*, or one of those thousand other rarities in which no other library is equally rich, and which the resources of all the millionaires combined would nowadays be powerless to obtain ?

The great book-lover who succeeded as second Earl, in 1783, was as closely identified with London and its literary interests as he was with Althorp and its sporting and agricultural activities ; and what Dibdin

says of him, in his *Bibliomania*, may well be included in the account of the house in which he lived for so many years and in which he assembled so many priceless treasures. He was, says the good Doctor, "a nobleman not less upright and weighty in the senate than polished and amiable in private life; who, cool and respected amidst the violence of party, has filled two of the most important offices of State in a manner at once popular and effective, and who, to his general love of the fine arts and acquaintance with classical literature, has superadded the noble achievement of having collected the finest private library in Europe."

The portrait of the second Earl, by Phillips, shows us a strong face lighted up by kind, speculative eyes, with a mouth of great determination; Mrs. Delany wrote of him, in his earlier years, that he was "never handsome, but always agreeable, and a fine young man"; and a later writer, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, speaks of him as being "tall and athletic, if not robust"; and adds that "his demeanour was particularly his own—calm, gentle, dignified, but not unbending." He died on November 10th, 1834, and was succeeded in his titles and estates by his son, John Charles Spencer, who as Lord Althorp had filled a large space in the political annals of the country. He had been, with some breaks, member for Northampton from 1806–1832; and from 1830–1834, was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Greville notes his "remarkable *bonhomie*, unalterable good nature and good temper"; but Ticknor, judging at first too much, perhaps, by the outward appearance of the man, remarks that he had "no particularly vivacious expression of countenance"; although after Ticknor had been in his company some time at Wentworth House, he seems to have realised that there were fine sterling qualities in "Honest Althorp," as he had been called in earlier days; and his recollections of Pitt and Fox and Sheridan seemed to his American visitor, for Ticknor afterwards visited him at Althorp, as reliable as they were endless.

Lord Spencer occupied Spencer House when in London during the relatively short time between his accession, in 1834, to the title, and his death in 1845, when he was succeeded by his brother, Frederick Spencer, who also, curiously enough, lived but ten years after that event, when he was succeeded by his son, the present peer, whose career as a statesman is too well known to require recapitulation here. The present Lord Spencer married, in 1858, Charlotte, the beautiful daughter of Frederick Charles William Seymour, Esq., and under her auspices as one of the most hospitable and successful of London hostesses, Spencer House was the rallying-point of fashion and political activity for many years. On her death, Lord Spencer practically gave up the mansion so far as entertaining was concerned; and in more recent years it has been let at different times,

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once to the Duke of Marlborough, and at present to Baron de Forest, as I have said.

It seems not unlikely that in the near future the present Lord Althorp, Lord Spencer's only brother and heir, will give it another lease of life as a fashionable rallying-place, when there is every reason to suppose that its old traditions for hospitality will be renewed, and that it will again become as closely identified with the family in whose hands it has remained for so long, as it was when the first Earl, who built it, dwelt here, or when the second Earl housed within its walls some of his priceless treasures.

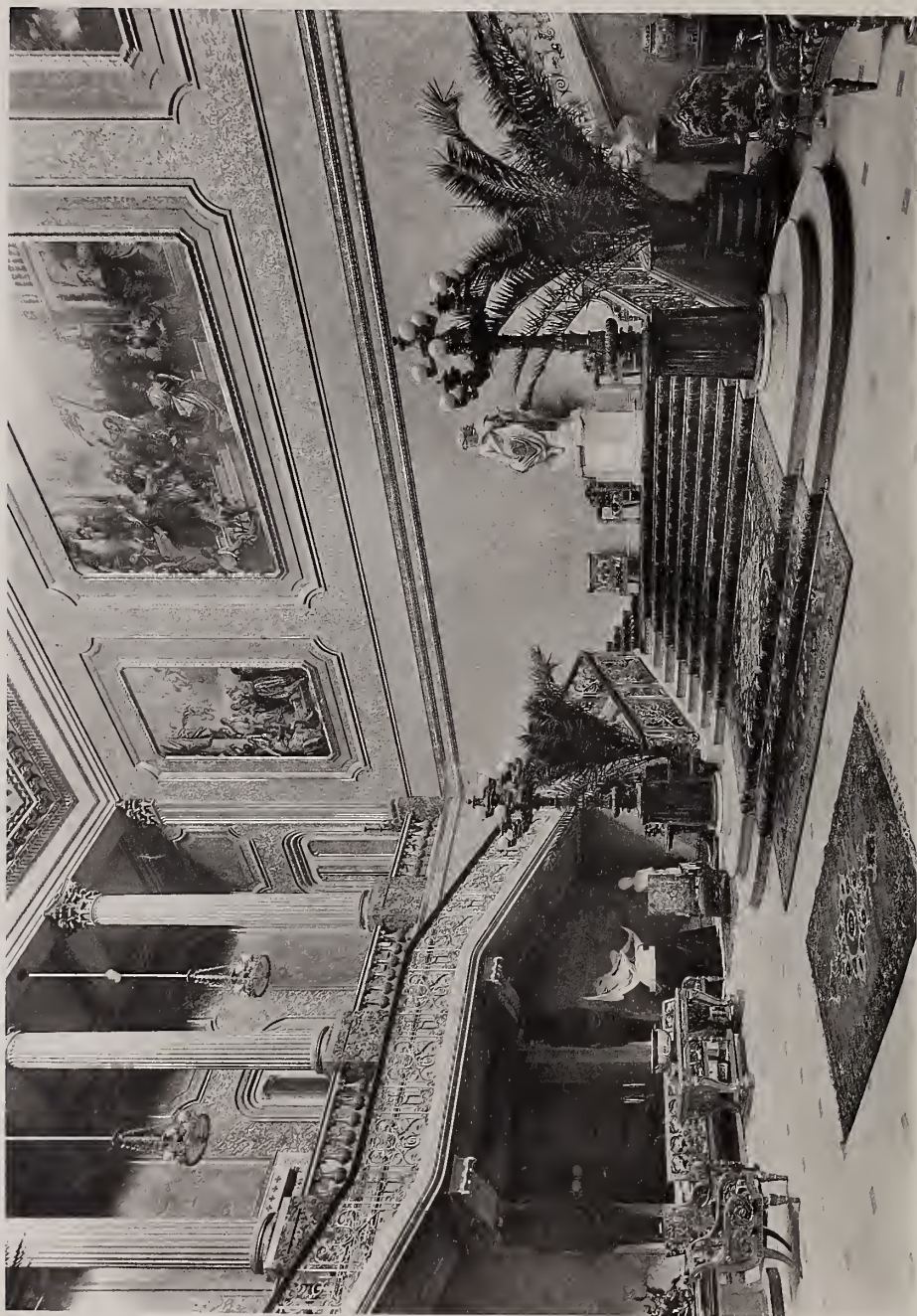


Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE GREAT HALL, STAFFORD HOUSE.

CHAPTER XIX

STAFFORD HOUSE

OWING to the interest which the Leveson-Gower family has always taken in any scheme having for its object the amelioration of the unfortunate and the furtherance of charity, it is probable that the interior of Stafford House is better known to the general public than that of any of the great houses of London. As long as any of us can remember, its doors have been open in the cause of charity ; and a bare list of the entertainments—bazaars, and concerts, and meetings—which have been convoked here for philanthropic purposes, would fill a volume in itself. Stafford House has, too, in the past been a great rallying-ground for those distinguished foreigners—Garibaldi and Poerio are notable examples—whose views have not always commended themselves to officialdom, and its gilded walls have ere now echoed sentiments which have had for their theme the emancipation of down-trodden races and the furtherance of civil freedom. It was also one of the few great houses where Queen Victoria came not only as an honoured guest but as a personal friend, drawn thither by the close affection she bore to many of the family—particularly the sixth Duke and his Duchess—an affection solidified by many years of close friendship. And nothing could be more appropriate than the collocation of this august name with those of her host and hostess who did so much towards alleviating the distressed and suffering ; for no sovereign believed more fully than Queen Victoria that, as Sidney Smith once said Grattan did, “ the noblest occupation of a man was to make other men free and happy.”

Stafford House is at once the largest (with the possible exception of Dorchester House), within the most gorgeous, and outwardly the most architecturally unostentatious of London's private palaces. The late Queen, having in mind, perhaps, the two former characteristics, together with the almost regal entertainments with which the mansion was identified, once said to the then Duchess of Sutherland, “ I have come from my house to your palace ” ; a “ word,” as Lord Ronald Gower remarks, worthy of Louis Quatorze himself. On the other hand, the

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building itself has been likened to a packing-case out of which the more elaborately designed Bridgewater House might have been taken ! There is certainly an air of massive solidity about the building which, even if it at first repels, at least comes as a relief after the factitious fashionings of certain more recently erected London houses ; for it is certainly better to rely on an absence of architectural embellishments than to raise a building in which every style is mingled, and a fuller publicity is given to insignificance by the very attempt to avoid it.

Dr. Waagen very truly says that "in extent, grandeur of proportions, solidity of material, and beauty of situation," Stafford House "excels every mansion in London," for it will be observed that he ingeniously avoids saying anything about the want of external decoration, and this being remembered, few will gainsay his verdict. Its situation, too, is indeed such that, perhaps, no other great house in London has been so immune from depreciation by the proximity of more modern erections. It practically remains in the stately isolation in which it stood when first erected, bounded on two sides by the Mall and the Green Park, and having only as neighbours the royal residence known as Clarence House, and the picturesque buildings of St. James's Palace.

Two writers have described this great palace,¹ with all the minuteness of close personal knowledge—Lord Ronald Gower, who was born within its walls, and the late Lord Beaconsfield. Indeed the "Crecy House" of *Lothair* is, *mutatis mutandis*, essentially the Stafford House of to-day, and the glamour of romance by which fact and fiction is skilfully intermingled, sufficiently preserves the characteristics of an edifice, which, as the novelist writes, was "not unworthy of Vicenza in its best days, though on a far more extensive style than any pile that city boasts."

Rogers, who had seen all the palaces of Europe, said he preferred Stafford House to them all, and he was wont to call it a fairy palace of which the then Duchess was the good fairy. And truly, as we shall see, it is a fairy palace, decorated as Versailles is decorated ; adorned by works of art as the old palaces of Italy or the more famous châteaux of France were adorned. In his interesting and charming *Reminiscences* Lord Ronald Gower thus writes of those who have from time to time assembled within its walls : "What a succession of illustrious guests have been welcomed in this splendid Hall ! Poerio and his fellow-sufferers, still weak from their confinement in the prisons of Naples ; Garibaldi the Deliverer, clad in his

¹ Expressions of admiration for the house and its contents are, of course, to be found scattered about the diaries and letters of the period ; Charles Greville on one occasion says : "The Hall looked exactly like one of Paul Veronese's pictures," and Etty remarks of the Picture Gallery, that it is "the most magnificent room in any palace or mansion in England."

famous red garb ; Livingstone and Charles Sumner, besides a host of princes¹ and magnates, potentates and plenipotentiaries, have ascended those storied stairs. On the principal landing of this staircase, fronting the great glass doors, which are supposed only to open for royalty or for the departing bride, how many charitable meetings have been held, how many triumphs of music accomplished ! Here Malibran, Grisi, Lablache, Rubini, and Tamburini have sung ; here Ristori and Thellusson recited. Nor has this Hall echoed only to the strains of Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti, but also to the voices of philanthropists and patriots—to Lord Shaftesbury advocating the cause of the white, and Garrison² that of the black slave.”

In the days of George II., Kent, the architect, designed for Queen Caroline the Library which occupied the site of what in Charles II.'s time were the gardens to the south of old Cleveland House, as may be seen by Knyff's plan ; this Library was completed at the end of 1737. In Pennant's day it had fallen to more prosaic uses as a lumber room, although the antiquarian notes that he saw there among the rubbish, pictures of interest depicting events in the life of Charles I. It, however, appears to have reverted to its former uses for a time in 1815, when the Duke of York's Library, which had previously been housed at the Horse Guards, was removed hither. It may have been that the Duke's attention was more particularly drawn to the advantages of this spot by the circumstance ; but whether this was so or no, he not long after projected the building of a residence for himself on this site, and in 1825 York House, as it was then called, came into existence. There is a tradition that the necessary funds—£60,000, says the Duke of Buckingham³—were borrowed by the Duke from the Marquis of Stafford (created Duke of Sutherland, in 1833), while another report has it that the Duke of York planned the house himself, although Wyatt was its nominal architect. In any case, His Royal Highness never lived to inhabit his new mansion⁴—like many another, he built forgetful of the Horatian maxim, and at his death the building was purchased by the Government for nearly £82,000 ; the price having been fixed by arbitration. A few months later, there seems to have been some intention on the part of the purchasers to allocate the house to the use of the Royal Society, and indeed matters went to

¹ A water-colour by Lami in Stafford House represents one of Queen Victoria's state visits here.

² A noted American abolitionist, born 1805, died 1879. He was President of the American Anti-Slavery Society from 1843 to 1865.

³ *Memoirs of the Court of George IV.*

⁴ In a contemporary notice, quoted in Ashton's *England under the Regency*, p. 152, we read that the Duke of York's residence, in 1814, was opposite Clarence House.

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the length of its being offered to, and accepted by, that august body ; however, for some cause or another,¹ the matter fell through, and the residence, with its gardens, was sold to the Marquis of Stafford, in December, 1827, for £72,000,² subject to an annual ground rent of £758, on a ninety-nine years lease, so that in eighteen years' time it should revert to the Crown. The money thus received by the Government was set apart for the purchase, in 1842, of the subsequently named Victoria Park, in the East End, which was opened as a recreation ground for the public ; so that, even in this, Stafford House was associated with a good work !

The Marquis of Stafford completed the house from the designs of B. Wyatt, and also with the help of Barry, by adding two storeys to it, the third storey being concealed by a high stone coping ; and by the embellishment of the interior in a way, perhaps, even beyond the dreams of the royal Duke who commenced its building. The mansion has been variously known as York House, Sutherland House, and Stafford House ; the second designation is that given in the current plans of London,³ and is that, I believe, favoured by the present owner—the Duke of Sutherland—but the last name is so indissolubly connected with it, that it is generally spoken of under that title.

Stafford House stands at the extreme south-western limit of the parish of St. James's, and forms indeed a solid and magnificent cornerstone to this historic part of the town. It is built entirely of hewn-stone, and since, quite recently, the dirt of some generations has been cleaned from its surface, its appearance has been so vastly improved, and certain features in the design have been so conspicuously brought to light, that, remembering its old state, one can hardly believe but that some magic power has rebuilt the house—unlike the Prisoner of Chillon's hair, it seems to have turned white in a single night !

The house is square in shape, and the principal front, which is on the north-west side, has a large projecting portico formed by eight Corinthian pillars supporting an entablature on which appears a ducal coronet—one of the details accentuated by the cleaning. The south and west fronts, facing the gardens, are similar in design, each having six Corinthian columns in the centre ; while the east front, which abuts on the private roadway leading to the Mall, and overlooking Clarence House and the garden of St. James's Palace, is quite plain.

¹ One reason given was that the increased expenditure was more than the Society could afford, and also that the rooms were not easily adaptable to its needs.

² "My neighbours have not yet got possession of York House ; because though the price is agreed, there is some proceeding that will take another month in the Court of Chancery to make a secure title."—Rt. Hon. T. Greville to the Duke of Buckingham, Jan. 28, 1828.

³ Although in the Directories themselves it is given as Stafford House.

Solid and to some extent majestic as is the exterior, it hardly gives promise of the magnificence, no lesser word will serve, of the interior, with its vast apartments, its superb Hall and grand staircase, its wealth of decoration, and above all, its wondrous contents. To Wyatt is due the planning of the interior, which reminded Dr. Waagen of some of those Genoese palaces in which the arts of architecture and decorations were carried to their furthest limits. The Great Hall is entered through immense doors formed of looking-glass, which, as we have seen, are only opened on special occasions; but when opened reveal the grand staircase lighted by a lantern or skylight fitted with engraved glass, with its majestic double flight of steps leading to the gallery that surrounds the vast hall.

The walls of this hall are of imitation *giallo antico*, relieved at intervals by Corinthian columns of white marble; and when we remember that it is no less than eighty feet square, and that it rises to a height, in the centre, of one hundred and twenty feet, we can gain some idea of its surprisingly grand effect, and can fully endorse Waagen's enthusiastic comments. The *coup d'œil* is greatly enhanced by the gilding of the staircase, and the red and white marble of the floor, but chiefly, perhaps, by Lorenzi's copies of pictures by Paul Veronese, which fill the compartments in the walls, representing "St. Sebastian conducted to Martyrdom," from the original in the Church of St. Sebastian at Venice, which Mrs. Jameson considered one of the finest dramatic pictures she had ever beheld; "The Marriage of St. Catherine," from the picture in the Church of St. Catherine, also at Venice; "The Nativity"; a female saint, and "The Martyrdom of St. George," the original of which may be seen in the Church of St. Giorgi at Verona. But decorative and effective as are these admirable copies, there were formerly two pictures in the Hall, hanging on each side of the fireplace but now placed in the Gallery, which will extort greater admiration—these are the two Murillos which once graced Marshal Soult's wonderful gallery: "The Prodigal's Return," for which eleven thousand guineas was paid; and "Abraham and the Angels." Both these pictures were stolen by the French leader from La Caridad, at Seville. They were exhibited at the British Institution in 1836, and the former, in particular, is a very fine example of Murillo at his best, the hunger-pinched, beseeching face of the penitent being very finely contrasted with the look of pity and love on that of the father; but in the latter, although the figure of Abraham is effective, those of the angels cannot be said to have the dignity which a greater master would have given them.

It can well be imagined that when this Hall and staircase are lighted

up, on special occasions, not only by innumerable candelabra, but also by the blaze of jewels and beautiful dresses of ladies, and the orders and decorations of men, what a magnificent effect is produced. Dr. Waagen was at a reception of this sort, in 1835, and fancied himself "at one of those splendid festivals which Paul Veronese has represented in his larger pictures with such animation and incomparable skill." One note alone broke the dazzling effect, and the good Doctor did not fail to observe it: the melancholy uniformity of the men's black clothes, which he quaintly says "was much as if a flight of crows had alighted among birds of the most brilliant and most delicate colours." It was on some such occasion that Mr. Gladstone, at the top of the staircase, was voicing to a lady friend his admiration of the brilliant effect of the many coloured dresses and the beautiful jewels of the female portion of the crowd ascending the stairs, when his companion expressed her surprise at his ever being able to find any satisfaction in a "bare majority"!

In contradistinction to this gay scene it is amusing to remember that at least on one occasion Stafford House witnessed an exhibition of objects—each of which formed a *memento mori* in its most eloquent form—for here, in the summer of 1875, the gardens might have been seen covered with nothing more or less than—wicker coffins! "*Surgit amari aliquid*," indeed! This bizarre exhibition, about which, of course, Punch had something to say, was held to illustrate the then much vexed question of "earth to earth" burial; and ladies in the gayest of gay attire might have been observed discussing with the greatest equanimity, the *pros* and *cons* of this curious method of burial.

The Great Hall of Stafford House, on the ground floor, is surrounded by a number of rooms all splendid in decoration, of great height and fine proportions, and all filled with numberless treasures of art. If we take the Dining Room first, we shall find there a variety of interesting works which have been comparatively recently moved to this apartment, among which a landscape by Jacob Ruysdael, with cattle by A. Van der Velde, and another by Claude are noticeable, as are particularly a very delicate pair by Wynants, as well as a delightful "Market Place" by Lingelbach, and a view of The Hague, by Jan Hackaert, in which the figures are by Nicholas de Helt Stockade, according to Waagen who considered them nearly equal to the work by A. Van der Velde, which came from the Muller collection at Amsterdam. Here, too, hangs Pordenone's "Woman taken in Adultery," from Sir George Yonge's collection; and among the portraits in this room is the large canvas of Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland, wife of the second Duke, with her daughter, afterwards Duchess of Argyll, by Lawrence, painted in 1823,

and then considered a remarkable likeness ; the second Duke of Sutherland, by the same master ; and Lord Gower, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, the picture, evidently, for which the Earl sat in May 1760, and the January of the following year ; while Mr. Sargent's fine full-length of the present Duchess, with its remarkable bit of painting of the "tender inward" of the left hand, and its splendid realism, hangs close by. Next to the Dining Room is the Ante-Dining Room, where the pictures exhibit an equal catholicity of taste and arrangement ; here is Jan Miel's "Monks distributing Alms at the Door of a Convent," which originally belonged to the Duc de Choiseul, and afterwards passed into the collection of the Countess of Holderness ; G. di Giovanni's "Christ's Charge to Peter" ; and an "Adoration of the Magi," a triptych, by an unknown master. Madame Vigée le Brun's portrait of the Princess Radziwill is also here ; as are a pair of compositions made up of those so-called "Roman Ruins" by Pannini, which at one period formed such a favourite subject for classical interpretation ; but the most charming of the pictures in this room are two landscapes ; one, a river scene, by Philip de Koningk, which Waagen very properly notes as possessing "astounding depth of power, with the most brilliant effect of light" ; and a landscape with figures by that fine painter Wynants ; while there is also "A Skirmish of Cavalry" by Van der Meulen, which once belonged to the Duchesse de Berri. From the Ante-Dining Room, the Red Drawing Room, so called because its walls are hung in red damask, is reached ; the half-dozen pictures that hang in this room are, with the exception of the two Murillos representing the Saints Justa and Rufina, which came from the Altamira Gallery, by Italian masters ; thus a "Holy Family," once in the Orleans collection, is by that somewhat infrequent painter Valerio Castello, a member of a family that gave a number of artists to the world ; another "Holy Family" is by Ludovico Caracci, and formerly belonged to Westall ; and a "Salvator Mundi" is attributed to Guercino ; and here, too, is one of the many excellent copies of Raphael's famous "Madonna della Sedia."

It is perhaps as well that but relatively few pictures hang on the walls of this room, as the rich hangings, accentuated by the magnificent carved and gilded cornices, &c., are enough in themselves to carry out an efficient scheme of decoration without the addition of pictorial aid.

The Ante-Library strikes, as it should, a quieter tone, and the ten works that hang on its walls benefit accordingly. They are chiefly of the Dutch and Flemish schools, and among them, one of the most beautiful is a river scene by Van Goyen, which is an exceptionally fine example of a master who was proverbially very unequal. Of this work Waagen thus

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speaks : "The conception of the circular tower and cattle on the canal is so poetic, the colouring so powerful, the sky so warm, the execution, which is of admirable body, so careful, that any one judging a picture on its own merits will readily admit this to rank with a Cuypp, a Ruysdael, and other masters of the highest class." Praise of so high a kind from such an authority is, indeed, a hall-mark to any work. This particular picture, before coming into the possession of the Marquis of Stafford, once belonged to the Duchesse de Berri.

Jacques Artois is responsible for another landscape with cattle. It is known that Teniers sometimes put in the figures of Artois's landscapes, but whether he worked in this way on this particular canvas I am unable to say ; in any case it is a very carefully painted work, and the landscape portion of it is a good specimen of Artois's clever touch. "The Marriage of St. Catherine," by Rubens, which hangs here, is conjectured by Waagen, on account of its rich golden and Titian-like tones, to have been executed when the painter was in Venice, or at any rate soon after his return, while the influence of Italy was still strong upon him. Here are also a landscape by Pynacker, once in the Duc de Berri's Gallery, and a warm and truthful representation of an old woman saying grace, by Brecklencamp, as well as "An Alchemist," by Granet ; and there is also a portrait of M^{lle}. de Charolais by Nattier, not very happily placed among these other masters, whose aim and style were so alien to the light, and graceful, though soulless methods of the French eighteenth-century school.

The Green Library, to which the dominant colour of the hangings gives the name, adjoins the Ante-Library, and here hangs the portrait group of Lady Evelyn Sutherland Leveson-Gower, afterwards Lady Blantyre, and her brother Lord Stafford, later third Duke of Sutherland, by Landseer. A tame fawn and some dogs are, almost inevitably with Sir Edwin, introduced into the picture, and Dunrobin Castle is seen in the background.

A number of miniatures are also in this room, such as copies of Raphael's "Fornarina," and "Leo X." ; and the "Cleopatra" of Guido. There is also a scene from the *Decameron* by Winterhalter, and a portrait of Lady Elizabeth Sutherland Leveson-Gower, afterwards Duchess of Argyll, by Bostock.

The Duke's Sitting Room is, of course, an essentially private apartment and does not therefore concern us, except that mention may be made of a few of the pictures which it contains, especially as several of them have an intrinsic interest, apart from those that possess a higher value as works of art. Of the former may be mentioned a representa-

tion of the "Hotel de Carnavalet," once the home of Madame de Sevigné, which Raguenet painted in 1766 for Horace Walpole, at the sale of whose treasures at Strawberry Hill, in 1842, it was purchased; as well as an interesting portrait of Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, who made St. James's Square, and thus laid the foundation of the West End as a residential quarter, by Old Stone after the picture by Vandyck. Among other portraits is that of a Venetian gentleman, by Paris Bordone, from Westall's collection; a portrait of herself by Lavinia Fontana, a female painter who adopted the style of the Caraccis, and whose father had given lessons to Ludovico; a copy of Gerard Dou's presentment of himself, the original of which is at Bridgewater House; a supposed head of Mary Queen of Scots; and a portrait of Elizabeth, Lady Grosvenor, by Sir W. Newton, as well as a miniature half-length copy of Lawrence's picture of the Duchess of Sutherland and her daughter, hanging in the Dining Room.

The room next the Duke's Sitting Room is called, rather oddly, the Writing Room. Here are a number of portraits among which I observed one of Landseer by himself, that of the first Duke of Sutherland by Phillips, and that of the sixth Duke of Devonshire, a copy by R. Sayers after Lawrence's picture; but although Hogarth's "Mr. Porter of Lichfield" also hangs here, the famous "Dr. Johnson,"¹ by Sir Joshua, which was formerly here, has been removed. Among the *genre* pictures is one of "Travellers Drinking at the door of a Country Inn," by Wouvermanns, and Van der Eckhout's "Cavaliers playing at Backgammon." On the ground floor, on the east and west sides of the Great Hall, run two corridors, both hung with many pictures, and filled with marble busts of eminent men, the first three Dukes of Sutherland, and Charles James Fox among them; and innumerable bronzes, cabinets, and *bric-à-brac*. Among the pictures are portraits of Philip II. of Spain by Coello; Lord Clanwilliam by Lawrence; Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; and a "Venetian Nobleman" by Paul Veronese; a portion of a large "Pieta,"² of which another part also hangs here, other fragments being at Dulwich and Castle Howard. Here, too, is Titian's "Education of Cupid," from the Orleans collection, which certainly deserves a better light than it obtains; it has a great pedigree, for in 1721 it was in the collection of the Duke of Bracciano, where Richardson saw it, having been purchased

¹ There is a replica of this picture at Knowle. Sir Joshua presented one of these portraits, exhibited in 1770, to Lucy Porter, Johnson's step-daughter, and Johnson saw it at her house at Lichfield during a visit in 1771, on which he wrote to Reynolds thanking him, and adding: "Every man has a lurking wish to appear considerable in his native place, and I was pleased with the dignity conferred by such a testimony of your regard."

² This has recently been sold.

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from the Gallery of Cardinal Azzolini, to whom it had been bequeathed by Christina, Queen of Sweden. It subsequently passed into the Orleans collection, whence it was purchased by Lord Stafford for eight hundred guineas. A portrait of Elizabeth de Bourbon, daughter of Henri Quatre, and first wife of Philip IV. of Spain, is also an interesting work, for it is from the brush of Rubens; it is unfortunately placed in an indifferent position.

The great picture by Paul de la Roche, of Lord Strafford, on his way to execution, receiving Laud's blessing, which is well known from the many reproductions that have been made of it, used to hang in the gallery, but is now in the West Corridor, and here, too, hangs the "Marriage of Henry VI. with Margaret of Anjou," which was once at Strawberry Hill, in the sale of which collection it was described in Robins's florid manner as "a truly extraordinary picture, which, as a specimen of the fine arts of the fifteenth century, may be pronounced unique." Walpole fully describes it in the first volume of his *Anecdotes of Painting*, and supposes it to have been executed after the King's death.

Besides these there are a number of interesting and valuable pictures hanging on the walls of both the east and west corridors; of which the bare enumeration would fill many pages; some of these have been recently hung here, while many of them as well as other interesting objects have been brought here from Trentham, among the pictures being a view of the Great Hall and Staircase of Stafford House, by David Roberts, and a curious bird's-eye view of Old Heidelberg, of immense size.

Splendid as are the rooms on the ground floor of Stafford House, they pale before the regal magnificence of those above them. Without indulging in thundering hyperbole it is difficult to give any conception of the size and stateliness of the great series of apartments which open one into another on the first floor. The Great Gallery has been properly termed "the most magnificent room in London"; and rightly so, for there is nothing comparable to it; even the splendour of Dorchester House has nothing to equal its immense size, or its bewilderingly superb decorations. 'The Princely Chandos,' or 'Vathek' Beckford, might have dreamed of such grandeur, and we all know how it appealed to the oriental mind of Lord Beaconsfield.

Many of the fine pictures that hang here formed once a portion of the famous Orleans collection. Among those which came from this gallery are Tintoretto's portraits of Titian, and Aretino; Gennari's "Young Man Reading," and the "Noah's Ark" of Bassano; Mola's "St. John Preaching in the Wilderness," and a landscape by Gasper Poussin; the famous "Muleteers," by Correggio, which was once in the possession of Christina, Queen of Sweden, and "The Circumcision" by

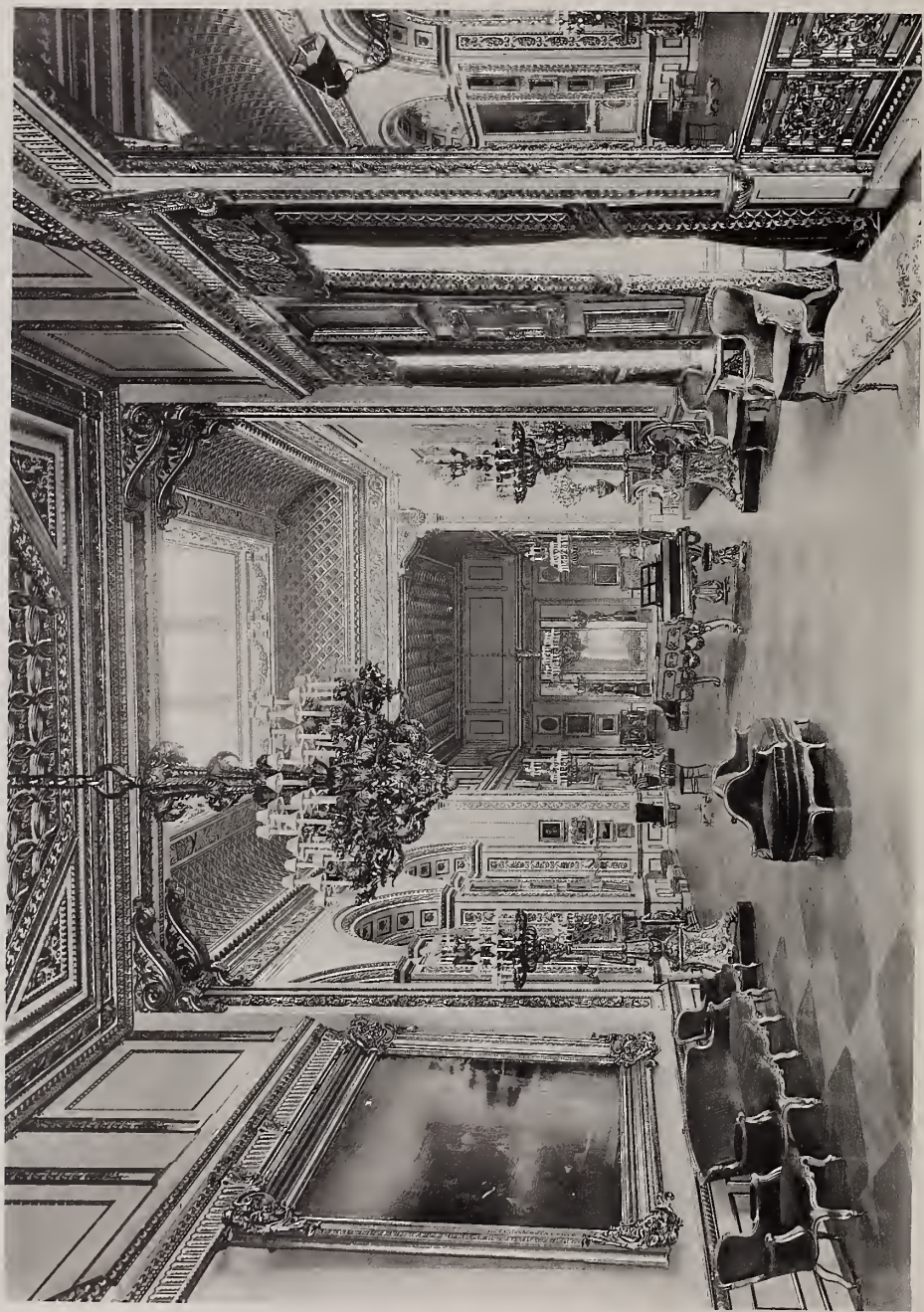


Photo Bedford Lemere & Co.

THE GREAT GALLERY, STAFFORD HOUSE.

Bassano. Hardly less interesting are those that had their *provenance* from Marshal Soult's gallery; such as Zurbaran's "St. Andrew"; Velasquez's "Duke of Gandia at the Door of a Convent"; "Christ Blessing Little Children," by a Spanish painter unidentified, and the two superb Murillos, which I have before mentioned.

Besides these splendid works, there are a number of others about which I must say a word or two, even if it be to merely enumerate their names and those of their painters. Among these is "Christ and the Woman of Samaria," by Alessandro Veronese, who is called variously Turchi and Il Orbetto, one of whose characteristics it was to paint his pictures without having made prefatory sketches; this particular work was formerly in the Girardini Gallery at Vienna; then there is Spagnoletto's "Christ at Emmaus," and a "Transfiguration," by Zuccherò; "The Ancient of Days," by Alonzo Cano, a work of rich and beautiful colouring; "The Holy Family," by Rubens, and inappropriately enough in such a connection, a "Bacchante and Satyr," by Nicholas Poussin. Guido is represented by a "Circumcision," and a portrait of his mother, and Spada by a head of himself; a *Fête Champêtre* is attributed to Bassano, and to Titian a portrait of Cardinal Chigi; while to come down a century, the portrait of Colbert, purchased at the sale of Mr. Turnbull's collection, is from the hand of Philippe de Champagne. That great painter Moroni is responsible for the superb "Portrait of a Young Man," once in Westall's collection, and Sir Joshua for a glorious head of Lady Stafford.¹

There are many others, but I cannot hope to make anything like a complete list, besides such an undertaking is not within my scheme; but before passing from the Great Gallery, I must say a word about the Romneys which have just been hung here, having been removed from Trentham. Of these there are five; one represents the Countess of Carlisle, daughter of the first Lord Stafford, and another the first Lord Stafford himself; and there is also one of grim old Lord Thurlow by the same master, as well as one of Elizabeth, Duchess of Sutherland; but the most important is a charming group of the children of the first Lord Stafford; the Ladies Leveson-Gower, Lady Anne Gower and Lord Granville; the six children here portrayed in a masterly manner worthy of Gainsborough or Reynolds, became in after life Lady Georgina Eliot, the Duchess of Beaufort, Lady Harrowby, Lady Anne Vernon, Lord Granville, and the second Lord Stafford, so that it has an almost historical interest besides its value as a consummate work of art.

Another famous Romney hangs in Stafford House; one of his innum-

¹ I find that, as Lady Gower, she sat to Sir Joshua in February, 1760.

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erable portraits of Lady Hamilton, in this case depicted as thinking—if that beautiful creature ever did give herself to thought—and known as “Meditation.”

In the ceiling of the Lantern of the Great Gallery is Guercino’s “St. Grisogono borne to Heaven by Angels.” This splendid work was once in the Church of St. Grisogono in Trastevere. The great height of the Lantern, of course, only permits of its being seen at a distance; but a circular mirror set on a stand beneath it enables one at least to look at it without being obliged to throw back the head in the inconvenient and painful manner necessitated by most ceiling paintings. Waagen, who erroneously calls the chief figure in this work, “St. Paul,” reminds us that it is painted in the manner of Guercino’s well-known fresco in the Villa Ludovisi at Rome, and notes that “the composition is free and bold, and executed in a masterly manner,” and that it is, as any one conversant with Guercino’s work can at once see for himself, highly characteristic of this painter’s style.

There has been recently much re-arrangement of the pictures not only in the Great Gallery but elsewhere in the house, which has caused the famous portrait of a Jesuit, by Moroni, to be removed. This work was sometimes called “Titian’s Schoolmaster,” because of a tradition that the Great Venetian was wont to study this wonderful work, and considered it even worthy of imitation. It came from the Borghese Gallery, where Richardson saw it in 1721. Hazlitt says that if he had been asked who painted it, he would have replied “either Titian or the Devil,” and Waagen was so delighted with this magnificent work that he records his preference for it to any other picture in the collection. Lord Stafford purchased it for the insignificant sum of £800, and it is regarded, by many authorities, as Moroni’s masterpiece. Vandyck’s superb portrait of the marble-collecting Earl of Arundel was also formerly in the Gallery; it was painted about 1635, and was once in the Orleans collection; when this came to be sold this particular work was found to be missing, and £400 was deducted as its then estimated value. It, however, eventually turned up in the gallery of M. Robit, at the sale of whose pictures in Paris in 1801 it was purchased by Lord Stafford for five hundred guineas.¹ It has been frequently engraved, by Tardieu, Sharp, Tomkins, and others, and is fully recorded in Smith’s *Catalogue Raisonné*.

Another fine work, which is among those now removed to other parts of Stafford House, is Gerard Honthorst’s “Christ before Caiaphas,” which came from the Palazzo Giustiniani, and was afterwards in the Lucca Gallery, and of which Lord Ronald Gower has written eloquently.

¹ Mrs. Jameson’s *Private Picture Galleries*.

Rubens's sketch *en grisaille* for his great picture of the Coronation of Marie de Medicis, now in the Louvre, is also one of the works, which should be mentioned, if only to draw attention to that certainty of touch and breadth of treatment for which this master is pre-eminent, a characteristic that Thackeray has recorded in one of his *Roundabout Papers*; but a greater even than Rubens is to be seen here, for Raphael's "Christ bearing His Cross" is one of the gems of the collection. This splendid picture was painted, it is said, for the altar of the Private Chapel of Cardinal Giovanni de Medici, afterwards Pope Pius X., and was afterwards in the Medici Palace at Florence. Mrs. Jameson, in mentioning this picture, states that the central figure is identical with that in "The Procession to Calvary," once belonging to Sir Philip Miles of Leigh Court, which formed one of the compartments of the predella to the altar-piece painted by the master for the Convent of St. Antony, at Perugia, in 1504, and afterwards at Blenheim Palace.

The State Drawing Room at Stafford House is remarkable for the beauty of its elaborately carved and gilded ceiling, and for its white marble mantelpieces with massive ormolu mounts, as well as for its splendid decorations, which make it only less magnificent, because smaller, than the Great Gallery; only four pictures hang here; a portrait of Lady Burlington by Buckner; and one of Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland, after Lawrence; and two curious works in tapestry, representing Henry Quatre, and the Regent Orleans, which are so skilfully worked that even on a close inspection they have all the appearance of paintings.

In the State Ante-Room which divides the Gallery from the Drawing Room, and the ceiling of which contains an allegorical painting by Paul Veronese: "Cupid receiving a globe from one of the Graces," hang half-a-dozen pictures, three of which are by Watteau, representing those musical parties which he invariably painted in so masterly a way with a freedom and skill in drawing far to seek in many of his followers. There is also here "A Group of Travellers inquiring their way of a Beggar," by Velasquez; and a "Holy Family" by Rottenhamer, executed with his well-known but somewhat effeminate delicacy, and in which the flowers introduced are by Daniel Seghers; Waagen mentions this picture as "the most delicate and elegant miniature in oils," that he had hitherto seen by these two artists.

The South-west Drawing Room, used by the Duchess as her Boudoir, is one of those stately apartments which constant use has transformed into a homely living-room. It is hung in green damask and the decorations are in white and gold; the ceiling, representing the Solar System, was executed by H. Howard, R.A., and so lofty is the room, that

when we gaze up it seems far enough off to be real ! On either side of the chimney-piece hang Fra Bartolomeo's "Virgin and Child," and Correggio's "Infant Christ." This latter beautiful little picture was purchased by the second Duke of Sutherland, at Parma, and is said to have been the finished study for the central group of the painter's famous "St. Jerome," in that town, which was executed in 1525, for the widow of Orazio Bergonzi, who paid the artist eighty golden crowns for the work which she presented to the Church of St. Antonio Abbate, in 1528.¹

Among the innumerable beautiful objects of art, other than pictorial, in this room, are two gilt arm-chairs, which once belonged to Marie Antoinette, and which were formerly at the Petit Trianon ; they bear on their backs the interlaced Initials "M. A." of their beautiful and unfortunate former possessor.²

Through the kindness of the Duke of Sutherland I have before me the private catalogue of the pictures at Stafford House, printed in 1898. Their number there is 317 ; others have, however, been brought here from Trentham ; while a number were recently sold by Messrs. Christie. Of the former the chief are those by Romney which I have before mentioned ; of the latter besides a number of works by English artists, such as Haydon, and Danby ; Lawrence, and Lely, and Kneller ; Jackson, and Etty ("The World before the Flood," exhibited in 1862), the most important were the "Philip IV. of Spain," by Rubens ; several portraits by Vandyck, particularly one of a gentleman on horseback ; the picture by Paul Veronese which I have already alluded to, and Murillo's representation of Archbishop Ambrosio Ignacio Spinola, described at length in Curtis's *Velasquez and Murillo*. I suppose, therefore, that at present there hang about three hundred pictures in Stafford House ; so that the reader will realise that I have mentioned but a tithe of them ; indeed to do more would be to make a *catalogue raisonnée* of this splendid collection, which is, of course, impracticable here. All I can hope to have done, is to have indicated the wealth of pictorial art which is contained in Stafford House, by a short account of some of the most notable of the pictures that constitute this priceless gallery.

It is indeed the wonders of art that adorn the walls of the mansion that help to make it a veritable shrine ; but even without such treasures the house itself is a thing to wonder at. Nowadays taste for decorative effect has veered round to the later period of Louis Seize, and

¹ Mrs. Jameson. There is a fine copy of this picture by Ludovico Caracci at Bridgewater House.

² I may mention in a note, that in the Banqueting Room which is gorgeous in carved gilding, stands Thorwaldsen's "Ganymede and the Eagle," which was brought from Rome by the second Duke of Sutherland in 1820.

therefore the more splendid rococo style of Louis Quatorze is to be found less and less retained. Stafford House is the last word on this earlier mode, and stands as the most superb and complete realisation of it to be seen in London, probably in England. The note struck here is one of gorgeous magnificence ; but notwithstanding this, these great gilded apartments wear an air of comfort very seldom found in such a connection ; while those actually in every day use preserve, in spite of their loftiness and huge dimensions, that appearance of homeliness which I am so insular as to think is only to be found in this country.

Before closing this chapter I ought to say a word or two about the famous Orleans Gallery, from which the Stafford House as well as the Bridgewater House collections were so splendidly recruited, and also about the Cabinet Lenoir which was once an added glory to the former gallery.

The Orleans pictures were brought together by the notorious Regent Orleans within the short period intervening between his becoming practical ruler of France, in 1714, and his death in 1723. His immense wealth and his unlimited power enabled him to form a collection second hardly to any ; and there is no doubt that, with all his faults, his taste was consummate and his judgment excellent. In his gallery were assembled forty-seven of the finest pictures that had belonged to Queen Christina of Sweden ; many of those which had been collected by Charles I. and Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin ; the collections of the Ducs de Grammont, de Noailles, and de Hautefeuille contributed their share, while to these were added masterpieces from the pictorial treasures assembled by Colbert, Tambonneau, De Launay, the Abbé Descamps, and M. de Chantelou. In 1724, there were found to be in the Orleans collection, no less than forty-seven pictures of undoubted genuineness, among which were six by Raphael, six by Correggio, and no less than twenty-five Titians !

On the death of the Regent this wondrous collection passed to his son who was so bigoted as to mutilate some of those canvases which his pious zeal considered unworthy of preservation, the Leda, and Io, and Danae, in particular falling victims to this eighteenth-century male equivalent to Mrs. Grundy. His son appears to have cared little either way for the pictures ; he left them severely alone, and during his life they remained locked up in their gallery. On his death, however, they came into the possession of the infamous Philippe Egalité who without possessing the good taste of the Regent, equalled him in depravity and extravagance.

All the world knows the history of this unworthy scion of a great

house; allying himself with the scum that for a time floated to the top of the turbulent waters of the French Revolution, he did all he could to raise money for the extension of his political propaganda, and one of the means he employed was the sale of the marvellous collection that had come down to him. The pictures by Italian painters he sold first for the, as it now seems, absurdly small sum of £18,500; the Dutch and Flemish works soon followed, fetching a little less than half this amount, so that for some £27,000 an assemblage of works of art was disposed of which would now be worth twenty times that sum, and even in those days must have been worth double what they realised.

The purchaser of the Italian pictures was a certain M. Laborde de Mereville, who, probably fearful for his treasures at a time of such national unrest, brought the whole over to London where, finding himself without funds, he mortgaged them for £40,000 to Harman the banker. At this moment Bryan the collector and author of the well-known *Dictionary of Painters*, saw them and having valued the 305 pictures forming this section of the Orleans collection, at £72,000, he induced the second Duke of Bridgewater to purchase the whole for £43,000. From these the Duke selected ninety-four of the most important at the price set upon them, viz., £39,000, and took in as partners in his venture, his nephew, Earl Gower, afterwards second Marquis of Stafford, who, as I pointed out in the chapter on Bridgewater House, had first induced his uncle to turn his attention to the acquisition of pictures, and the Earl of Carlisle, who had married Lady Margaret Leveson-Gower, daughter of the first Marquis of Stafford.

The remaining pictures were first exhibited and then sold, and as they alone realised £41,000; the ninety-four gems of the collection had actually cost the Duke and his two relatives but £2000! The pictures retained were allotted so that Lord Gower took a fourth, and Lord Carlisle an eighth share, and the remainder, some forty-seven, were retained by the Duke, and were valued at something over £23,000. These, added to the already good collection owned by the Duke, and gradually supplemented by other purchases, and then valued at £150,000, were left by him, at his death in 1803, to Lord Gower who succeeded his father as second Marquis of Stafford seven months later, and they were housed in the mansion in Cleveland Row (the precursor of the present Bridgewater House), where for a number of years they were known the world over, as the famous Stafford Gallery, of which Young, in 1825, issued his *Catalogue of the Collection of Pictures at Cleveland House, the property of the Marquis of Stafford*, with a reproduction of every picture, and a description of each in French and English.

The second Marquis died in 1833, when his second son, Lord Francis Leveson-Gower, inherited the collection, under the provisions of the will of the Duke of Bridgewater. In this way the Orleans section of the collection was divided, as that portion (a fourth, as I have mentioned) taken by Earl Gower passed, at his death, to his eldest son, the second Duke of Sutherland (Lord Stafford having been created first Duke about six months before his death). Thus we see that among the pictures in Stafford House are numbered a fourth of the famous Orleans collection while the bulk of them are now at Bridgewater House, and have been dealt with in the chapter devoted to that splendid mansion and its remarkable contents.

It is somewhat curious that the majority of the Italian pictures collected by the Regent Orleans from all parts of Europe should finally be found in the harbour of refuge of two great houses within a hundred yards of each other in London.¹

Of the Cabinet Lenoir I need not say much, for, unfortunately it is no longer at Stafford House. Chantilly now possesses this unique collection of French portraits which covered a period from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.

It was purchased by the second Duke of Sutherland in 1838, from its collector M. Alexandre Le Noir who occupied himself during the French Revolution in preserving some of the treasures of art from the insensate fury of the rabble; M. Le Noir subsequently fell on bad days and had to dispose of his collection, as it turned out, only a year before he died. It was offered to the French Government who cavilled over the very moderate sum asked, when the Duke of Sutherland, through Mr. M. D. Colnaghi, immediately paid what was demanded.

It is hardly possible to overestimate the value of these portraits to the historian and antiquary as well as to the art lover, and it is sad to think that they should have been permitted to leave this country, although there is no gainsaying the fact that their present home is an even more appropriate one than Stafford House could be, for all the most illustrious Frenchmen and women of four centuries are represented among them—sovereigns and statesmen; poets and men of letters; painters and beautiful and talented women. One of the drawings of Cinq Mars was depicted by Louis XIII. himself, and the portraits of Louvois and Colbert are by Nanteuil; while there is a head of Giovanni Bellini by Carpaccio, and

¹ Among many accounts of the Orleans Gallery, by Waagen, Mrs. Jameson and the rest, see Redford in his *Art Sales*, who quotes Buchanan's *Memoirs of Painting* in his first volume for further details.

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one of Carpaccio by Bellini, and there are others from the hands of Holbein and Pourbus. A fairly full description of the collection is given by Mrs. Jameson, although it, of course, does not pretend to anything approaching completeness.

It seemed only necessary for me to make this brief mention of the famous collection here to indicate the additional lustre it once shed on Stafford House.

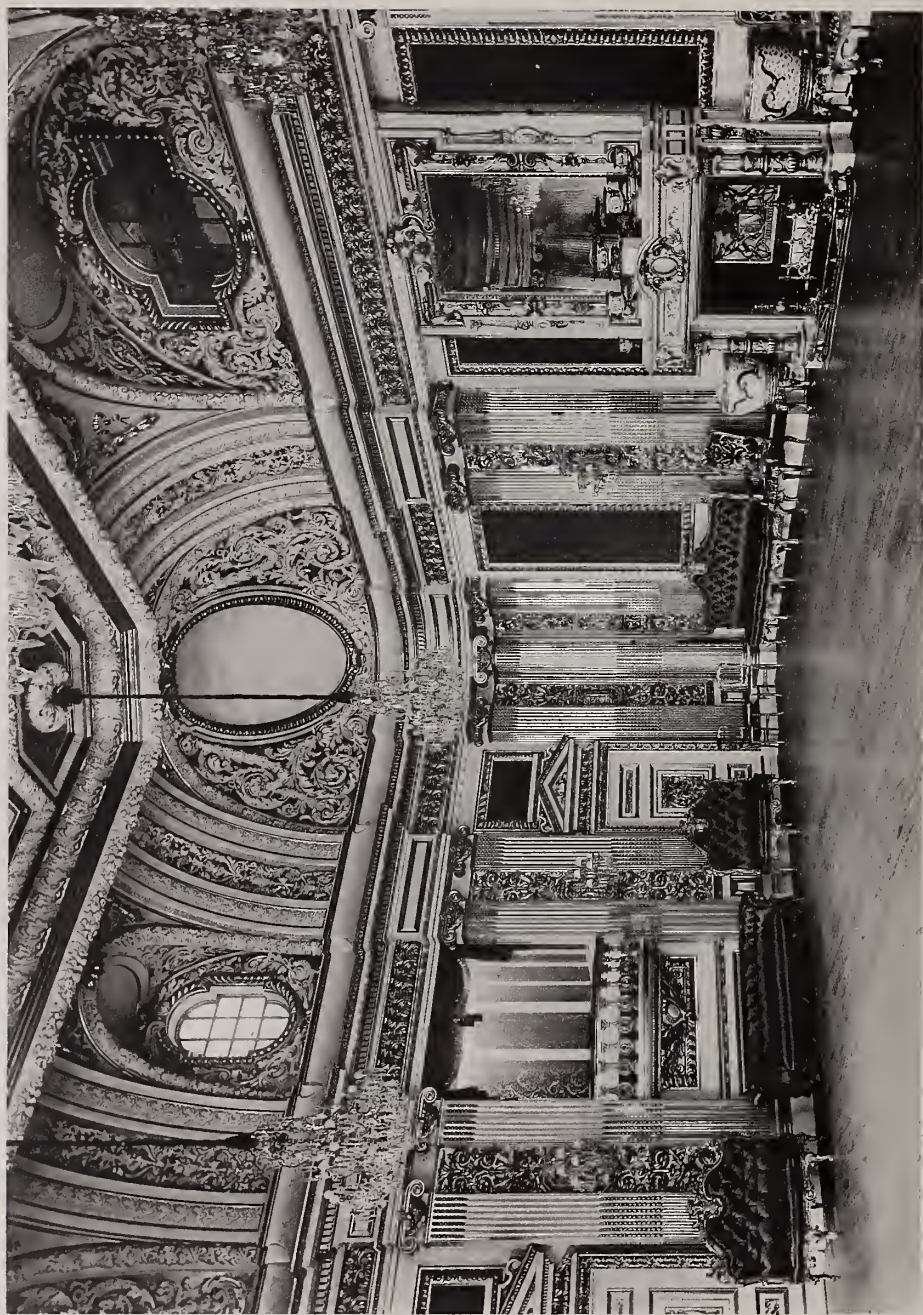


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THE BALL ROOM, WIMBORNE HOUSE.

CHAPTER XX

WIMBORNE HOUSE

ARLINGTON Street, which is built on ground granted by Charles II. to Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, in 1681, and sold by the latter in the same year to Mr. Pym, is a short thoroughfare ; indeed it is almost a *cul-de-sac*, but it is fraught with memories, and even to-day when rebuilding is rampant from the east to the west, some of its houses still preserve the appearance they wore when the earlier Georges were on the throne. This is particularly the case with the small house, No. 5 on the left side, as we enter the street from Piccadilly. Here Sir Robert Walpole once lived, and it is for this reason perhaps the most historically interesting habitation in the street. A memorial tablet marks the residence of the great Prime Minister who died here, in 1745, and left the residence to his son Horace, whose town house it continued to be for no less than thirty-four years. Apart from the fact that the paternal mansion was here, Horace was well acquainted with Arlington Street, for he is known to have resided in two other houses here ; No. 24, in which he was born, and which was demolished in 1886, and No. 18, where the tragic fate of his cat Selima immortalised by Gay, is said to have occurred.

Charles James Fox was living at No. 9 during the last two years of his life ; and Lord and Lady Nelson had their final quarrel on the subject of Lady Hamilton, in lodgings here, on January 13th, 1801. At an earlier day at least three notable women lived in Arlington Street—the Duchess of Cleveland, after the death of Charles II. ; the Duchess of Buckingham, widow of the second Duke, and daughter of Fairfax ; and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in the house of her father, the Marquis of Dorchester, afterwards Duke of Kingston, whence, on a celebrated occasion, the Duke sent for his little daughter and introduced her to the Kit Cat Club. But the street was in the past chiefly notable as a political centre, and Walpole could write that from his earliest memory it had been a ministerial street.

Apart from Horace's illustrious father, William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, lived next door to Sir Robert's original dwelling on the west side

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before the latter, on going out of office in 1742, bought No. 5, on the "non-ministerial side." Lord Carteret built the house, which now belongs to Lord Yarborough, in 1734, William Kent being the architect; while Mr. Pelham was succeeded in another residence here by the Duke of Grafton; no wonder that Walpole could write that this was "absolutely the ministerial side," and should have complacently added that "nothing can be more dignified than this position." The late Lord Salisbury helped to keep up the traditions of the street as a political centre; while the great houses which to-day congregate here are sufficient, when we remember by whom they are occupied, to preserve that element of exclusiveness for which Arlington Street has always been known. At No. 16 resided the Duke of Rutland, and here died, in 1827, the Duke of York; No. 21, was famous for the dinners which Lord Sefton used to give, under the superintendence of the great Ude; and No. 19, still remains in the Marquis of Zetland's family. Indeed the situation is as desirable and unique as it was in 1728 when the author of the *New Review of London*, could thus speak of it: "That side of Arlington Street near the Green Park is one of the most beautiful situations in Europe, for health, convenience, and beauty; the front of the street is in the midst of the hurry and splendour of the town; and the back is in the quiet simplicity of the country." It is little to be wondered at, therefore, that such a site should have been chosen for the erection of great and splendid dwellings; and indeed there is a little colony of them here.

But fine as they all are, hardly any of them can compare with No. 22, now known as Wimborne House, either in internal decoration or size, and hardly in intrinsic interest of association. In the first place it has had a succession of noble owners, having originally been the residence of the Marquis Camden, son of the great Judge, who died in 1840, after having filled a variety of important offices of State. He was succeeded in the occupancy of the house by the seventh Duke of Beaufort, who as Lord Worcester had been aide-de-camp to Wellington during the Peninsular War, and after Vittoria had nearly succeeded in capturing Joseph Bonaparte as he fled from the field. Lord Worcester succeeded to the Dukedom on the death of his father, in 1835. He was prominent even in a family noted for its exquisite manners and urbanity, for charm and tact; says a contemporary of him: "It was impossible to have the slightest communication with his Grace, without being struck by his inherent courtliness, which was enhanced by a fine port, a commanding figure, and a countenance whose features were cast in a truly noble mould." Such was the nobleman who purchased what is now Wimborne House, in 1840. No sooner had he done so than he christened it after his own

title, and proceeded to lay out vast sums on its internal decoration. To this end he employed the famous Owen Jones, the architect, well known for his great work on the Alhambra, as well as for his *Grammar of Ornament* and other works, to superintend the embellishment of the mansion, and particularly to design the wonderful ceiling in the Drawing Room which is one of the most notable features in the house. Besides Owen Jones, E. Latilla was commissioned to paint certain portions of the residence in fresco ; and nothing, in short, seems to have been neglected which taste and money could procure to make the place worthy of its noble owner. The Duke died in 1853, but about a year before that event, he had sold Beaufort House to the eleventh Duke of Hamilton, who is said to have given £60,000 for it.

The Duke of Hamilton succeeded to the title in 1852, and had married in 1843, while Marquis of Douglas, the Princess Marie of Baden, on the question of whose precedence in this country, in consequence of her alliance with one who was not only not of royal birth, but was at that time technically a commoner, some interesting references will be found in Queen Victoria's letters.

The Duke of Hamilton seems to have spent almost as much on Hamilton House, as it was now called, as his predecessor had done, and among other evidences of his lavish expenditure on it, there can still be seen in some of the rooms, the iron fire backs bearing his coronet and the famous Hamilton motto of "Through." The Duke resided here for a little over ten years, dying in July 1863. His widow, however, apparently used it as a town residence for a short time, but in 1867, it was offered for sale by auction, and its present owner, then Sir Ivor Bertie Guest, being upon the point of marrying Lady Cornelia Spencer Churchill, daughter of the seventh Duke of Marlborough, purchased it ; in 1880, Sir Ivor was created Baron Wimborne, since which time the mansion has been known as Wimborne House ; the scene of innumerable splendid hospitalities, and in every sense a private palace.

Under Lord Wimborne's auspices so many improvements have been made in the mansion that its earlier owners would hardly know it, except where they recognised some of the gorgeous decorations which have been carefully preserved. A magnificent Ball Room is the chief of these additions, while another is the transformation of an inner court into a small winter garden which not only adds an effective note to the interior, but also helps to add to its warmth and convenience ; this winter garden lies to the left of the gallery joining the Entrance Hall with the body of the house, and filled with marble busts, among which those of Lord Wimborne, and Lady Charlotte Guest ; Sir John Guest and Sir Henry Layard the

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great traveller, are conspicuous, as well as with costly and beautiful cabinets, and a thousand *objets d'art* of personal interest and intrinsic worth. The ceiling of this gallery is divided into a series of concave compartments, in the centre of each of which appears a circular painting in the Italian manner; while the surrounding decorations are in the style of the Adams, and have all the sweetness and light characteristic of their graceful designs. This corridor leads to the principal staircase which is lighted from the roof, and with its delicate scheme of decoration, and its walls covered with valuable, although modern, tapestry, thrown into relief by the gilding of the balustrade, is one of the most effective, and probably the most skilfully contrived of any in London.

If, instead of ascending it, we pass from the corridor through the winter garden, we shall come at once into the Ball Room, a splendid apartment rich in elaborate gilt and carved mouldings, which was formed some twenty years ago, and in which so many great receptions have been held since. As this room is not infrequently used for family purposes it preserves a pleasant air of homeliness not generally associated with the ball-rooms of great houses which are so often a blaze of light and splendour on special occasions, and for the rest of the year are enveloped in coverings, and are left alone to meditate on the beauty and fashion they have seen for a few fleeting hours. Indeed all the rooms at Wimborne House are essentially living rooms, so that the splendour of their decorations is, as it seems to me, enhanced by the fact that they are made homely by more or less constant use.

The Dining Room is very effectively decorated in white and gold, a light and agreeable note which is preserved practically throughout the mansion. The Reception Rooms, besides these are, on the ground floor, four in number—the Morning Room overlooking the winter garden; the Green Drawing Room; the Yellow Drawing Room, and the Great Drawing Room.

The Green Drawing Room is octagonal in shape, and though relatively small is full of beautiful decorative work, which, however, calls for no special comment, as this would but mean the employment of so many eulogistic adjectives, and a ringing of the changes on, to the reader, somewhat meaningless epithets? In the Yellow Drawing Room, however, we must loiter a little, for besides the beautiful decorations of the walls and ceilings, the cabinets full of lovely porcelain, and above all its outlook on the verdure of the Green Park, there hang here a number of pictures of great beauty and merit. Among these are three by François Boucher, two of them being portraits executed with that delightful refinement and grace so characteristic of this most characteristic of French eighteenth-

century masters. One of them represents a young girl seated and playing with a cupid, and could hardly have been painted by any other hand than that which knew how to embody so faithfully the tastes and ideas of a period at once so decorative and so superficial. The second is particularly interesting, and is at least as fine as anything the artist produced in this *genre*. Without data as to its genesis or subject, it is difficult to say whom it represents, but it strikes me as being probably a portrait of the celebrated actress, Madame Favart, of whom Boucher is known to have painted one if not more portraits. Large sums have been offered for this beautiful work, which points to the fact that it is as commercially valuable as it is intrinsically captivating. The third portrait represents a young girl asleep, and is even more graceful if less interesting than the last.

But it is not merely the gay and *insouciant* French art of the eighteenth century that graces this room ; there are two portraits by Reynolds, one of a lady in profile, a splendid piece of work, and the other of a young man, while there is also a fine head by Hogarth. Vandyck is responsible for a portrait of a man of admirable quality, and by it hangs the head of a lady by Zuccherò, as well as a pair of three-quarter-length portraits of a man and woman by Van der Helst, together with a highly finished portrait of a child in fancy dress, which Netscher may have painted, although I cannot say with certainty that he did. To add to the catholicity of taste observable in the pictorial adornment of this room, there are two modern pictures here ; one of Lord Wimborne's three children when young, painted by Hicks, in 1877 ; and Watt's celebrated "Ariadne."

The Blue Drawing Room still preserves that name, although the prevailing note in the decorative scheme which is responsible for it, is no longer present, except in the blue sky of the background to the allegorical group forming the central decoration of the ceiling, and the blue and white china figures of Gainsborough's "Duchess of Devonshire," and "The Blue Boy," which stand on the mantelpiece. To-day the walls are painted in dull white, and are elaborately decorated with gold scroll-work and festoons which give a very rich effect to the apartment ; while, of course, the room, as are all the Reception Rooms in the house, is filled with beautiful furniture and costly decorative objects of all sorts.

But the most important, as it is by far the largest, of the Reception Rooms at Wimborne House, is the Drawing Room, which remains one of the most successful of Owen Jones's methods of internal decoration. The ceiling is said to have been brought from Italy, but I think it more probable that it was copied from one there ; it is in compartments picked out in red and blue, and in the centre of each is a decorative figure

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en grisaille, while the divisions are separated from each other by elaborate carved and gilded mouldings. The whole effect is extraordinarily rich and effective, the ceiling just escaping being heavy by reason of its excellent proportions. The Italian note of the room is carried out by a wealth of gilt carving introduced into the cornices and over-doors. I do not know in London any apartment quite analogous to the Drawing Room at Wimborne House; others are larger and loftier; others are filled with gems of pictorial art which are here, perhaps wisely, absent; but no room, not even those more magnificent ones at Stafford House or Dorchester House, reproduces quite in the same way the decorative glories of the Italian renaissance.

I have seen it stated that this Drawing Room was introduced by Hogarth into the second scene of his *Marriage à la Mode*, but it has none of the characteristics of that which appears in Hogarth's picture, and Mr. Hare gives the pillared saloon in No. 24, since demolished, as the original setting of the incident portrayed; in any case the fine Drawing Room at Wimborne House had it then been as we know it to-day, might well have served such a purpose, for there are not many in London which are more spacious or more beautiful. This, of course, is greatly due to the original construction of the mansion; but not a little of the additional charm which tasteful decoration and splendid furniture gives, is the outcome of the care of its present owner.

The Boudoir is on a higher floor, and is as elaborate and admirable in decoration as the other Reception Rooms. There hangs in this room an exceptionally beautiful Venetian-glass Chandelier; and there is also here one of those console-tables in which the French workmen of the eighteenth century show how closely they approached, both in aim and result, to the truest artistic feeling.

On this floor is also the Library, a splendid room of great size and height. It is fitted in oak, and has an Elizabethan effect rather startling after the later period in which the rest of the house is decorated. The mantelpiece is particularly noticeable, and the fire-back is adorned with the Duke of Hamilton's coronet and crest, with the motto "Through" beneath them.

Much of the wall space is, of course, taken up by bookcases, but where room allows there hang several pictures, notably a pair of very fine landscapes by J. F. Van Bloemen; two curious *genre* pictures by Longhi, a Jan Both, and a very effective seascape of the Dutch school, as well as a fine view of St. Peter's as seen from the Tiber, by Pannini; to mention but these.

It is difficult to convey an idea of the beauty and even magnificence

of a great mansion, such as Wimborne House is, when it happens as it does here that the pictorial contents are of not first-rate importance; because a description of mere decoration or of beautiful furniture can at best convey little to the reader, and is apt to be tiresome. Had this not been the case I might easily have filled pages with descriptions of the rare and costly articles in china and furniture, and more pages still with the details of decoration, which appear throughout the house in such profusion. Rather have I endeavoured to give a general idea of the interior of the house, than to make a catalogue of its contents; but had I attempted the latter I should have placed very highly the particularly fine chest of oriental lacquer with ormolu mounts which stands in the Hall, and for which at the neighbouring Christies some fabulous sum might conceivably be realised; and it would also have been necessary to notice at length, the pictures which hang in the Entrance Hall, and the circular panels of cupids and flowers which help to give that Hall a French note in the midst of its other cosmopolitan attributes.

Before quitting Wimborne House the excellence of its situation must be mentioned. Within a stone's throw of the rush of Piccadilly, it yet, curiously enough, remains shrouded in peaceful silence; the great Ritz Hotel which now lies between it and the main thoroughfare, and which, by-the-bye, stands on the site of old Arlington House, and of the later immense building erected by Lord Walsingham, has, of course, much to do with this, and although its huge proportions seem to dwarf Wimborne House, it at least shelters it from the north wind, and helps to deaden the roar of Piccadilly.

From the windows of Wimborne House one looks out on to the beautiful verdure of the Green Park; with the bandstand and its surrounding chairs which are, I think, so detrimental to the outlook of the houses lower down, happily far away and unseen. One might here be in the country, were it not that Devonshire House and the adjacent portion of Piccadilly can be seen through the trees, which perhaps, however, only tends to accentuate the beauty of the grass and foliage which in summer refresh the eye, and add another charm to London life.

To attempt any record of the innumerable splendid entertainments that have taken place in Wimborne House would be impossible; it has for so many years been famous for its hospitality both under the auspices of its present owner, as well as during the time of the two Dukes who preceded him in its occupancy, that it naturally takes a prominent place in the annals of fashion; just as it is no less associated with the cause of charity and the furtherance of good works.

At the time of the last Coronation when many of London's great

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houses were pressed into the service of visiting royalties, Prince and Princess Henry of Prussia were lodged here as being one of those London mansions most fitted to serve as the temporary abode of an Emperor's brother.

With Wimborne House I conclude these notices of what I have ventured to term the Private Palaces of London. As will have been seen by any one, who may have had the curiosity and patience to read this book, they differ very considerably from each other in points of interest and in importance. Some are veritable palaces of art, famous all over the world for the beauty and value of their pictorial contents ; others have an intrinsic interest from the great men and women with whom in the past they have been associated ; still others are notable examples of the architectural features of the different periods at which they were erected ; while practically all of them are identified with historic families, and are sentient with the vigorous life and large hospitality of the twentieth century ; for which diverse reasons their importance is so great and their interest so emphatic.

Those which I have discussed in the earlier chapters, are now but memories, and to rehabilitate their past glories it has been necessary to rely on written records ; but those which form the subject of the larger portion of this volume, those which are to-day the splendid town residences of their various owners, or of others who hold them merely for a term, have but to be visited to enable us to realise their beauty and importance. Many of my readers may not have an opportunity of doing this, and for those I trust that what I have set down may help to convey some idea of the riches which are contained in these great mansions. For those who are acquainted with their interiors, I can but hope that what I have written about them will be found to be substantially correct ; and perhaps I may have been able to add something to the interest they may take in the subject, by recording additional facts, not already within their knowledge, illustrating the past history of these great houses and their former owners ; at least I trust so ; and if I have succeeded, then, for me, a pleasure will have been added to that which I have already received, not only in browsing in the annals of the past, but also in being permitted to roam at will through those splendid mansions that still remain, and which are not only among the proudest possessions of London, but, in some sense, one of the glories of the country.

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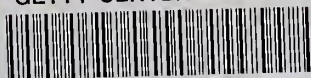
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